

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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MY TRIUMPH.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

The autumn-time has come;
On woods that dream of bloom,
And over purpling vines,
The low sun fainter shines.

The aster-flower is failing,
The hazel's gold is paling;
Yet overhead more near
The eternal stars appear!

And present gratitude
Insures the future's good,
And for the things I see
I trust the things to be;

That in the paths untrod,
And the long days of God,
My feet shall still be led,
My heart be comforted.

O living friends who love me!
O dear ones gone above me!
Careless of other fame,
I leave to you my name.

Hide it from idle praises,
Save it from evil phrases;
Why, when dear lips that spake it
Are dumb, should strangers wake it?

Let the thick curtain fall;
I better know than all
How little I have gained,
How vast the unattained.

Not by the page word-painted
Let life be banned or sainted:
Deeper than written scroll
The colors of the soul.

Sweeter than any sung
My songs that found no tongue;
Nobler than any fact
My wish that failed of act.

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail o win.

What matter, I or they?
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said
And life the sweeter made?

Hail to the coming singers!
Hail to the brave light-bringers!
Forward I reach and share
All that they sing and dare.

The airs of heaven blow o'er me
A glory shines before me
Of what mankind shall be,—
Pure, generous, brave and free.

A dream of man and woman
Diviner but still human
Solving the riddle old,
Shaping the Age of Gold.

The love of God and neighbor,
An equal-handed labor;
The richer life, where beauty
Walks hand in hand with duty.

Ring, bells in uncreased steeples,
The joy of unborn peoples,
Sound, trumpets far off blown,
Your triumph is my own!

Parcel and part of all,
I keep the festival,
Fore-reach the good to be,
And share the victory.

I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward.
And take, by faith, while living,
My freehold of thanksgiving.

Atlantic Monthly.

A GRAVE BESIDE A STREAM.

REV. VII. 17.

How strange the union of the stream and grave!
Eternal motion and eternal rest;
Earth's billow fixed, beside the transient wave
Upon the water's breast.

The summer cloud upon the height distils
Each sunny ripple hurrying swiftly past;
And man's proud life, like fleeting vapour, fills
This wave of earth at last.

The streamlet, through the churchyard's solemn
calm,
Sounds like an ancient prophet's voice of
faith,
Chanting beside the grave a glorious psalm
Of life in midst of death.

The living water and the burial mound
Proclaim in parable, that through death's
sleep
Flows on for aye, though none may hear its
sound,
Life's river still and deep.

The grave like Laban's "heap of witness"
seems,
Raised 'twixt the sleeper and the world's
alarm,
O'er which no anxious cares or evil dreams
May pass to do him harm.

No more he wrestles by the brook of life;
The night is past — the Angel stands revealed;
He now enjoys the blessing wrung from strife,
And every wound is healed.

Macmillan's Magazine. HUGH MACMILLAN.

Translated for The Living Age.
CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

BY MONSIEUR DUPANLOUP BISHOP OF ORLÉANS.

I WOULD first remind my reader that God, the Creator of man, was also the institutor of the family and its rights, and hence was the founder of all society and of all authority among men.

When God made man in his image and likeness, he did not wish to make him a solitary being. The light and the suns had been created. They were the servants of man and not the type of his creation. The type was higher. God said, "Let us make man in our image and likeness." This was a fateful saying. The effect followed the words.

God took a little earth in his divine hands, and it pleased him himself to mould therefrom the body of man; and this clay, fashioned by such hands, soon received the most beautiful and noblest form that had yet appeared in the world.

Nevertheless, this was nothing but an admirable statue, and not the image and likeness of God.

Then God breathed on its face the breath of life, *spiraculam vitæ*, the pure inspiration of eternal and divine life, and man became a living soul. *Factus est in animam viventem*. Then life was given him; spiritual life, — he thought, he knew, he judged, he wished, he loved; material life, — he breathed, he moved, he saw, he heard.

Then was formed, between this body, made of earth, it is true, but by a divine workman, and the soul, the living breath of the Most High, that extraordinary union which would have remained inviolate if we had not sinned.

Then this body, so straight and comely, felt itself for the first time naturally raised toward heaven. A generous blood circulated in the veins, the heart beat forcibly in the breast, the motionless feet trod the earth, the hands clasped to bless their Creator, and the knees bowed to adore Him.

Then the face lighted up; the glance, the smile, the speech, and the charm of expression shone therein all at once. A royal majesty seated itself on the brow; innocence, candor, pure joy, gratitude and love embellished the beaming countenance.

Then above all, was kindled for the first time in the eyes that celestial flame with which nothing else in nature can compare, and which, in spite of sin, still flashes at times across our saddened eyelids fires brighter and purer than the rays of the brightest sun.

Then finally man raised toward heaven a look which was almost divine; the angels saw it, and, contemplating the excellence of his beauty and the admirable reflection of the glory of God on his august face, if they were not tempted to call him a God, they willingly believed him to be His image.

Such was man as he was made by God. God saw him, blessed him, called him, and, showing him the vast extent of the earth, the sea and the heavens, said to him, "Thou art the masterpiece of my hands, be king over all my works," *præsit universæ terræ*; all nature, such is thy kingdom; I have given it all to thee, *dedit universa* (Gen. I. 26, 29).

Then lowering his eyes toward earth, man took possession of the world; the animals crouched at his feet and received their names from him as from the most powerful of monarchs; and soon going forth through his domain, he freely exercised that noble and majestic empire the sceptre of which was afterwards broken in his hands, but whose glorious though mournful wrecks yet remain to us.

Nevertheless, the work of God was still incomplete; the second half of the human race was wanting. Humanity had received from God its majesty and strength; it still lacked something of the grace, delicacy, sensibility and gentleness which God wished to give it.

Man, the powerful king of nature, was on earth only as a silent king in a desert; alone, without intercourse with his fellows, without natural support, without hope of posterity, and knowing neither to whom to transmit in the future, nor with whom to share in the present, the glory and delights of this vast empire; nor even to whom around him to confide the sentiments of his heart toward God.

God then said, "It is not good for man to be alone," and this speech, of so simple yet so profound a meaning, became the founda-

tion of all human society; all law, all institutions, all teachings and all social virtues spring from it.

And here again we see the design of the Creator maintains itself on the same level, and everything is always made in the image and likeness of God. God himself, if I may thus express myself, is not alone in the boundless grandeur of his eternity, he is one, but he is not alone. In the substantial perfection of the one and incomparable Being is met the social perfection of a divine Trinity. *Tres sunt qui testimonium dant in celo.* There are Three who perpetually render in Heaven an ineffable witness of life, intellect and love, and these three are inseparable in perfect and infinite Unity. The Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit know and eternally converse with each other in a wholly divine partnership.

Here then is presented to my eyes a new and beautiful design of God, a marvellous work of His power and goodness; I have to reveal the origin of the second half of the human race, the holy destiny and nobility of the companion of man.

And let no one fear; it is a delicate subject, I know; but I shall treat it with the profound and religious respect which fills my heart, and also with the Christian simplicity of ancient days. I shall say nothing, moreover, that I do not find in the Holy Books. They have summed up everything in a few words of a brevity, holiness and modesty worthy of admiration.

And first the companion of man was created like man himself with profound and divine counsel. "It is not good for man to be alone. Let us make him a helpmeet like unto himself," said God. *Faciamus.* The new work would therefore be worthy of the first one; it would also be a work of power, wisdom and gentleness; truth, beauty and goodness would still be the groundwork and glory of this new creature, with especial and excellent prerogatives.

Thus it was not, as in so many other brilliant but low creations, an imperious command which decided the formation of the companion of man. No, it was a command of honor and respect for her; and of goodness and solicitude for man, for God added, "Let us make for man a companion who will be like unto him, and who will aid and

support him on earth," *Faciamus ei adiutorem similem sibi. . . sociam.*

This was summing up the whole matter; while maintaining and strongly marking the primacy and natural superiority of man, it was also declaring to him that this superiority was neither so strong nor so high that it could dispense here on earth with support, compassion and aid; it was at the same time and in advance establishing the authority of him who commands and decides in the human race, and also providing against the temptations of his pride.

It was establishing the dignity of her who counsels and sustains, but at the same time providing against the perils of her weakness and even, if it must be added, the possible temptations of her vanity.

It was saying to man that woman was not his slave, but his companion, of absolutely the same nature as himself, although with gifts, prerogatives and faculties *similar but different*, and without which man, the human race, and the education of its sons would have missed the perfection for which God destined them.

There is but one language which says all this and in so few words—the divine language. It is only found written in this wise upon earth in our Holy Books.

And strange to say, men have not failed to misconstrue it whenever they could!

We know, in the prodigious blindness of pagan impiety, how this sublime and gentle creature became so debased a slave, so vile a thing, that after forty centuries of frightful degradation, it needed a revelation, a Gospel, a Jesus Christ, a Son of God, a Mother of God, on earth, to raise her up and to teach the human race anew in what dignity had been created in the beginning of the wife, sister, daughter and mother of man.

What are we to say finally of that mysterious sleep, of that trance during which man felt that God took from him his companion? Could God do anything more to make them both comprehend that there should be between them a subordinate equality? Could he better tell them how deep, profound, sacred, tender and binding forever, human alliances should be.

Thus when God presented this companion to man, ravished with admiration and joy

he cried, "This now is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man, wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." *Hoc nunc os ex ossibus meis et caro de carne mea; hoc vocabitur Virago, quoniam de viro sumpta est. Quamobrem relinquet homo patrem suum et matrem, et adhærebit uxori suæ.*" (Gen. II. 24).

I ask the thoughtful minds who do me the honor to read me; do not these brief and marvellous words consecrate at once the unity, sanctity, indissolubility, fidelity, tenderness, religious respect, and natural and necessary subordination of the conjugal union? And how admirable it is! to bind more closely to this beautiful order him who could most easily violate it. God willed that the immortal law of marriage and its indissoluble unity should be uttered for the first time by the lips of man himself, and gush, so to speak, from his heart without effort as the spontaneous cry of his nature, and the just feeling of his first love.

And what are we to say in fine—for I wish to leave nothing unsaid, the language of the Gospel tells everything with an incomparable simplicity and profundity, and where the thoughts of men only know how to be frivolous and unworthy, the Christian language always remains chaste and pure—what are we to say then of that grave and remarkable expression of the Scriptures by which the Spirit of God describes this new creation—*Aedificavit*? Thus, from this superfluous bone, God with his divine hand formed, reared, *built up* the companion of man,—*aedificavit*.

Behold by what an astonishing expression the Creator wished to make us remark, in this new masterpiece of his power, something grand, magnificent and complete; or so to speak, a magnificent edifice in which he delighted in lavishing a nobility, dignity, grace, purity, modesty, and all the sweetness and charm of the marvellous proportions that a divine workman could give to his most beautiful work.

Thus was instituted humanity, and thereby all human life and the family. For God then blessed them, *Benedixit illis*; it should be remarked that it was in the perfect innocence of the terrestrial paradise that the nup-

tial benediction was solemnly given by God himself to the first authors of the human race.

And this is why, even to-day, the benediction of human alliances, among all civilized people, is one of the most august functions of the sacerdotal ministry. This is why we bitterly groan when we see, in the full light of the Gospel, blinded men and misguided women disgracing themselves by shameful alliances; when we see, above all, legislators without dignity and enlightenment yielding to narrow prejudices and low resentments, persist in banishing—degrading the conjugal union—far from the benediction of God and outside the religious civilization of all nations.

God then blessed them, and gave them this remarkable command: "Increase and multiply," *Crescite, multiplicamini, replete terram*. Your children, who will be mine, will never multiply too much on earth. Cover it therefore with your families; let your alliances always be pure, fruitful and without stain. Rear your children in my love, and fear not; my providence is great; I will provide for everything, and the means of life shall never be wanting to those who have received it from me.

Then God regarded what he had made, *Videtque Deus cuncta quæ fecerit*, and He said that all was good, and very good; *Et erant valde bona*.

It is thus that the human family went forth from the hands of God! . . . : to remain in all ages, the primitive and ever blessed element, the necessary foundation of the great society of the human race.

The family! that mysterious unity, in which is reflected, in so magnificent and touching a manner, the power of God, who protects it, His wisdom which governs it, and His love, which inspires and sustains it. The family! the august sanctuary of the authority which created it, of the education which raised it, of the providence which perpetuated it. The family! the living and inextinguishable centre of the two noblest sentiments which are in the hearts of the children of men—gratitude and respect. The family! the immortal object, the first and last aim of the solicitude of heaven and the divine laws, as it should also be of earth and social legislation. The family! that is

to say, in fine, the names that are sweetest to the ear of man — father, mother, son, brother, daughter, sister — the purest affections, the first friendships of life; the most confiding and the simplest joys; the most amiable virtues, — simplicity, candor and innocence.

And what shall we say of the paternal roof, the home? No! human language has no more enchanting names, and the religious man, no more imperishable memories! Thus when our Saviour Jesus Christ wished to make us comprehend the tenderness of His heart for those who accomplished here below the will of His celestial Father, He could say nothing better than, "He shall be to me as a brother, a mother, or a sister." *Ipse meus frater, et soror, et mater est.* (Matt. xii. 30.)

Such is, then, to go back to its origin, the primitive sanctity of marriage. Such is the nature and nobility of the union which begins and constitutes the family: a truly sacred union in which the Creator binds man and his companion so closely to each other, and associates them with His created power itself by bonds so sweet and strong, to enable them to rear the children He has given them.

Such therefore, were the primitive laws of marriage, and also the first laws of human society. But we know that these admirable laws were not long respected, the inviolability and the glory of the most beneficent institution of the Creator soon disappeared with the happiness and innocence of the first days, and the companion of man was not slow in descending with man himself from his original greatness.

And here is seen for the first time what will be the sad and never-failing experience of all ages; everything becomes debased and disgraced in the human family when it separates from God, who alone makes its blessing and nobleness; and this society of father, mother and children are so closely connected, that one cannot fall without dragging down the other with it. Yet God did not abandon them, and in the darkest days, according to the beautiful expression of the Holy Books, *He did not leave Himself without witness upon earth.* Who does not remember with emotion those pure joys and marvellous consolations with which the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob took delight in surrounding the chaste alliances of the ancient patriarchs? and in this age, we wish that Christian brides may be loving as Rachel, faithful as Sarah, gentle and wise as Rebecca, courageous and pure as the wise women of the Old Testament.

But with the exception of that little people of God, hidden in a corner of the earth,

at the extremity of the East, and the faithful guardian of the divine revelation, paganism covered everything with its darkness, and in that profound night no words can tell in what debasement and ignominy human alliances were sunk; in this respect the nations who were the most highly civilized were the most corrupt; and we know in particular to what lengths Roman depravity and hardness of heart were carried.

I have already said that evil was humanly irremediable; a divine aid was required; but this aid was not wanting to humanity; Jesus Christ appeared and soon regenerated the face of the world.

Immortal thanks be rendered the God of the Gospel! Marriage found again, all at once, under His hand and by virtue of the power of His benediction, the dignity, grace, and inviolability of the primitive institution.

It has been said, and it is true, that there is nothing pure and noble in nature which the blessing of the Redeemer of men does not purify and ennoble still more, nothing holy that it does not sanctify, nothing great that it does not elevate; and it is a beautiful and touching spectacle to see Christ at Cana honoring first with His presence the innocent nuptials of a poor couple, adding by a shining miracle to the happiness of their feast, and soon after, giving a higher dignity to this alliance, worthy of veneration, by imprinting upon it a new and more august character and making it a sacrament of the evangelical law: *Sacramentum hoc magnum est in Christo, et in Ecclesia*: in a word, consecrating the conjugal society to that degree that it became a part of religion; protecting it in fine against the impatience and caprice of the passions by the vigor of the most holy laws and sanctifying forever its unity, individuality, and holiness, at once by the menace of the most severe penalties, and at the same time, by the promise of the most glorious privileges.

To all serious and attentive minds this was a work manifestly divine.

Thus the Evangelists, so brief, so sparing in details, in other things, have here multiplied them, that we may fully understand all the grandeur, as well as all the purity, of the evangelical work.

I would point out here the two principal features. The unity of the conjugal alliance had been sadly forgotten, the ancient law itself had become relaxed; *Ad duritiam cordis*: Jesus Christ brought back this holy unity, and after having pronounced anew the words of the primitive Institution, *Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, "adharebit*

uxori suæ," the Son of God added a new force thereto; and reproved forever all unworthy plurality. *They shall be two in One flesh, said He, and they shall be but two, and the unity between them shall be so intimate, and so perfect, that they shall be like two in One, "duo in una."* Or rather, resumed Jesus Christ, *they shall no longer be two; "Jam non sunt duo."* No: they shall absolutely be but One. It is not only their destinies but it is their natures, that are so closely united and blended together that all shall be as one between them; one heart, one soul, one body, one life, *"Jam non duo, sed una caro."*

And in regard to indissolubility, Jesus Christ adds, that what God has joined together, no man shall ever put asunder, — but God only, by death, when it pleases Him. *"Quod ergo Deus conjunxit, homo non separat;"* and when the disciples seemed astonished at His words, He told them, such had been the primitive law, *ab initio fuit sic*, and if the ancient law had tolerated some deviations in this regard, it was only on account of the hardness of heart of a gross people, *Ad duritiam cordis*.

It was certainly difficult to proclaim the law and its sovereign reason, with more simplicity, energy, and grandeur. Thus it was God who united them, God who made them one for the other, and in the beginning one from the other, God who made them for Himself and in the work of Creation associated both with His supreme power. It is destroying the divine work itself to separate or disunite them, it is interfering with the entire design of the Creator. The power of man cannot go thus far, *quod ergo Deus conjunxit homo non separat*; It was difficult to plant more firmly, or to raise higher the barrier which should be the safeguard of public morals and the surest rampart of conjugal friendship. It was also difficult to protect more surely the source and education of human generations, and that mysterious association in which unity and stability are the only strength and honor.

It was difficult, in fine, to stigmatise more forcibly, in advance, the blind attempts of those men, who have tried to destroy one of the most admirable laws of the Gospel to the family, and to dishonor the conjugal union, by introducing into the legislature of a Christian nation, the scandal of divorce, and by permitting its corruption, caprice, and passion to break at their will, those ties the hand of God had created, and which are alone honorable, because they are eternal.

In fact, the evangelical law is here but the divine stamp imprinted upon a great

moral and natural truth, which men, it is true, would not have had the power to define without the Gospel, but the admirable wisdom of which they comprehend as soon as the Gospel reveals it to them. All men of true genius, in rendering here a solemn homage to the evangelical law, have recognized that this question has an immense social scope, and that everything was involved in it: Bossuet, whose clear mind penetrated all things, after having said, "conjugal love is no longer divided, so holy an association ends only with life, and children no longer see their mother put aside, and a step-mother take her place," Bossuet adds, "The fidelity, holiness, and happiness of marriages, are of public interest, and the source of fidelity to the State. This law is political as well as moral and religious."

Bossuet clearly saw here the full scope of the design of God, and it was through profound solicitude for all humanity that Jesus Christ did so great a work.

And indeed, what was in question? first, to found the happiness of the family, to raise up woman from the abasement into which she had fallen, to restore to her her proper place, and her primitive dignity under the conjugal roof, to make of this feeble creature the noble companion of man, to ennoble man himself, by giving him a sister, a mother, a daughter worthy of him. But Jesus Christ did still more. He laid the foundation of social morals; He fettered human depravity and inconstancy by this holy severity; He held in check the tumultuous passions in the midst of an imperiled society; He wished to protect, bless, and sanctify all humanity by establishing on an inviolable basis the concord and holiness of marriage, the peaceful association of all the human race, and thereby finally insure the necessary and great accomplishment of the paternal and maternal work of education, without which the unity and stability of the marriage tie is impossible.

It is for this the Church has always displayed such an extraordinary energy in the defence of the matrimonial laws, it is for this that she has labored and suffered so much to preserve intact that sacred deposit of evangelical morality.

All the great struggles of the priesthood, and of the empire, have had no more serious object than this, and we will find them unceasingly involved therein. The most grievous persecutions the Church has endured for ten centuries have been caused by the jealous care with which she has always defended the purity of marriage and the indissolubility of the human family; at all

epochs, in the Middle Ages, as in times nearer our own, the princes most beloved by her and others whom she saw crowned with glory, all have found in her an invincible resistance in whatever touched upon this law. Who does not know the struggles against Louis VII., Philip Augustus, Lothaire, the Emperor Henry the Fourth, and so many others? The greatest Popes have shed their blood therein; the Church has done more, she has sacrificed for it in some measure, the Christian unity itself. She has let her heart be rent asunder, and her members be cut off, rather than yield on this point, or even draw back before sovereign passions, or the audacity of all-powerful libertinism. Henry the Eighth, Catherine of Aragon — and England can render testimony to this, as well as Germany and Philip of Hesse, through the cowardly compliance of Luther and Protestantism.

So much is true, and it is well to repeat it, and it is time that the earth and those that govern it, should remember it; so much is true, that the Gospel has been given to the world doubtless, to teach it before all things the road to heaven, but at the same time that the inhabitants of earth may seek there with confidence, laws for all their needs, lessons for all their fortunes, consolations for all their griefs, infallible securities for the happiness of the world! See how in this divine plan all things pertaining to marriage assume a character of nobility and grandeur, and are endowed with celestial dignity, and if I may so speak, sublime taste! How the vain and light thoughts of the children of the age fade away before these divine revelations! How miserable appears human frivolity! How we comprehend and appreciate in this light, the grand words of St. Paul: "Marriage is holy and honorable:" *Honorable connubium*. "The nuptial bed is without stain." *Thorus immaculatus*! Oh, holy religion of the Christian, it is alone in thee that we find this divine ideal, and these things clothed in so pure a language.

In fine marriage is a great and august sacrament: *Sacramentum hoc magnum est*. It is not then, simply a low and profane contract, a natural and fleeting affection, a capricious and uncertain association: No: it is a sacrament; and God Himself, intervening as witness, judge and avenger in this great contract, Christians banish thence forever the coldness which would be outrage, the dislike which would be perjury, and, finally, the infidelity which would be sacrilege.

Thus it is with the cross in one hand, and the gospel in the other, and with eyes

constantly raised towards heaven, that the holy Catholic Church blesses her married children, and consecrates their union, thus responding at once to the needs of the family, to which she procures holy and irrevocable alliances, and chasing from the domestic hearth suspicions and misunderstandings, giving to society pure, faithful and spotless marriages.

Among the happy things in this world where there are so few, among the rare spectacles of happiness, to which the benediction of heaven has not been refused, there is no picture more beautiful and touching than to see a young Christian, with the wife of his choice, both prostrate at the foot of the same altar, humbly receiving from the hand of God, the benediction on their alliance.

It is thus that the Church takes possession in the name of heaven of the most ardent faculty of the soul to make of it the pure glory of youth, the ornament of the family, the crown of society itself and the triumph of fidelity to virtue.

It is thus that religion ennobles in the name of virtue, the most ardent as well as the gentlest of the affections, to secure for it in advance a consolation for the bitterness of life, a support for its weakness, and a prop for its strength, and by turns grave and indulgent, gentle and austere, she restrains by the firmness of a holy alliance, the passions of this turbulent age; she unites the married pair by ties that death alone can break, and receiving their solemn vows, permits them to give themselves up with security to a virtuous happiness, opening their hearts to the most joyous, as well as the holiest of hopes, and promises them, whilst they are willing to taste near her, and under her eyes, a pure joy and innocent delight, that she will cause the happiness of a faithful friendship and all the prosperity of a chaste union and a holy companionship to survive a few fleeting days of enchantment and illusion.

The holy Catholic Church does even more than this. She reveals to the married Christians that this image of time is but the image of a yet more perfect union, which will have for them neither time nor end and which awaits them in the bosom of God.

On that great day, she embraces their entire life with a glance, and blessing them with power and love, looks beyond the present, even to the end of their days; whilst she invokes the prosperity of time upon their alliance here below, she thinks more of the eternity to come; hidden under the veil of the most holy ceremonies, she mingles with her vows the hope that these two noble and amiable beings whom

she blesses upon earth will find at the foot of her altar, the invisible wings of faith and of virtue, to pass through life without soiling their souls, that they may be gathered one day, into the bosom of God, there to live as the angels, in that true heavenly union, which can no longer be troubled by the clouds of earth or the sad separations of time.

We have seen that unity, indissolubility, and sanctity, are the great laws, the grave and solemn obligations of marriage. Such too are the instructions by which the Church elevates those whom she blesses to a level with their new duties, and inspires them as well with the sweetness of the tenderest of affections and the courage of the strongest virtue; such are the auspices under which she invites them to give themselves one to another and both to the Lord! Can there be any purer or more favorable?

Thus, according to the grave and sweet picture drawn for us by Tertullian, which I am glad to place before the eyes of my readers (of St. Elisabeth of Hungary and her spouse) this gentle pair, blessed by heaven, having but one roof, one fireside, one name, one heart, one life, both disciples of religion, both impressed with love and respect for her, and both finding near her the guarantee of their happiness, both bear together the yoke of the Lord. They will be seen praying and prostrating themselves together: if heaven grants them a holy and happy fruitfulness, they will be found applying themselves together to rear their children, and to give them pious lessons and touching examples; they will teach them to lisp the name of God, and to mingle it with their first expressions of love for their parents. Then they will come together to praise God in His house; together to listen to His word, and to participate at the holy banquet, thus exhibiting to the astonished eyes of the world, the charms of virtue, and the rare and sweet image of an inviolable fidelity to the divine commands in all things, so sweet, yet so seldom seen here below.

In fine they will equally share together the good and the evil, the consolations and inevitable pains of life. Who does not know that the pains are more frequent than the joys? Toil and poverty are oftener met than repose and opulence. But no matter, poor or rich, they will nobly bear to the end the burthen of their duties.

If they are poor they will both willingly toil together, and the blessing of God will rest upon their laborious home, on this pair devoting each day to the trying toils to obtain bread for their family; on the mainly constancy of a father struggling

against the difficulties of the times to gain a livelihood for his wife and children — on the active resignation of a mother, who according to the word of God himself, is truly the aid "*adjutoriam*," the gentle, yet firm support, the constant sustainer of a father and children. Such was the touching spectacle that formerly was often met among us in better and happier days, and which is still seen here and there in our cities, and above all in the provinces, in the homes of Christian workmen and laborers.

If they are rich, in the midst of debased morals and general laxity, they will form for themselves a regular life of useful occupation, they will not condemn themselves, as so many do, to a sad and shameful idleness. They will surround themselves if needs be, with a glorious singularity, and together they will visit the poor, console the afflicted, and tend the sick, and the world itself will bless them as the tutelary angels of virtue and misfortune.

I know it is not always under such favorable auspices that the marriages of men are contracted, but I may be pardoned for having turned my eyes from so many deplorable scenes — so many scandalous catastrophes with which our age echoes daily — to rest them for a moment, on the smiling images of a virtuous felicity, which, thanks to the God of the Gospel, is found yet upon earth.

And, it should be said in closing, that when the Church blesses human alliances, it is not without profound alarm and secret terror. Those who have observed her closely at that solemn moment, have often seen her anxious looks, sadly fixed on those she blessed. And how could she resist being sad at the thought of the perils that menace here below those who are too often drawn to her temples by a sacrilegious temerity? Must not her tenderness be troubled at the sight of the anathema already pronounced against those guilty alliances which are formed only by the impulse of blind passion, or a viler interest? Will there not be domestic dissensions, angry disputes, or even still greater unhappiness? What will become of these young creatures, what will be the tissue of their lives? This is what strangers, and even the indifferent ask themselves, who are drawn into the anxiety with which such a spectacle inspires to-day, more than ever, all who are capable of serious thought.

In fine, since the relaxation of laws, the open irreligion among some, and the madness of worldly dissipation among others, have so profoundly deteriorated domestic morals, what has become of the peace and

honor of families, of public and private fidelity, of marital authority, of necessary subordination, of reciprocal affection, of respectful love, of domestic modesty, of the sanctity of duty, lastly, of chastity, the sole protection of mutual faith in marriage, the only faithful depository of the nobility of race, and the purity of blood, and which alone even succeeds in religiously preserving the traces thereof?

Do there yet remain among us many of those families worthy of respect who offer to the public esteem the austere probity and the morals of ancient days? Are there yet many of those fathers and mothers whose whole thought was to transmit to their sons as a sacred deposit, in a serious education, the triple heritage of honor, antique virtue and religion, received and maintained from generation to generation with inviolable fidelity?

It is for these grave motives that the Church surrounds the alliances of men with so much solicitude and such religious care. It is for this that she should preside in concert with the country at the marriage feast. It is for this that since the coming of the Gospel, all true legislators have claimed and ordained for marriage, the prayers of faith, the sacred ceremonies, the blessing of an august ministry, and all the instructions of that venerable liturgy which is even more sublime and beautiful here than elsewhere.

And I ask those who are blinded by those narrow prejudices, those fatal passions of which I lately spoke, how could you dispense here with religion? With what could you replace an authority so high? Where will you find that gentle strength, that divine wisdom, that profound tenderness, that pure gravity, that mysterious language, which is so touching, and which religion alone knows how to infuse into her lessons and teachings at this supreme moment.

Who are you? I do not say to reveal to the wedded pair the dignity and beauty of an irreproachable alliance; I do not say to teach them that this holy day is for them a solemn initiation into the great duties of life, but to inspire them with that strength of soul and holy energy of virtue, without which there is nothing lasting upon earth.

Ah! surely when religion blesses these young spouses, she does not wear a stern visage; she is the first to applaud their joy; she loves the pomp which surrounds them, she would not wish to remain a stranger to it; she adds thereto her ceremonies and modest pomp, she blesses the virginal crown which should adorn the pure brow of the young bride, the ring itself of her alliance and

even the gold which is the symbol of the temporal prosperity which she asks of the Lord for those whom she unites.

No: the church refuses her blessing to nothing that is useful, desirable and without sin.

But in the midst of these things, she has lofty thoughts and serious sentiments, and she wishes that there should be blended with the pomp of the day, a religious remembrance of the great obligations she imposes.

Thus, whether it be a pastor, venerated for his age and virtues, or the youngest of her priests whom she employs for this august ministry, it is always the man of solitude and prayer, the man of priestly chastity, the man of God, essentially a stranger to the world and its alliances, and thereby the more capable of blessing them.

What is there in the power of human legislators that can replace all this? Shall we oppose to this picture of marriage a simple civil agreement, sadly contracted afar from that altar which alone can efficaciously guarantee the pledged faith? What do I say? without even God's name being pronounced? that is to say, marriage without a religious character, without a blessing or hope from on high, without any defined obligations before God, without any other sanction of conscience than the curbs of legal restraint, without any other exhortation addressed to the wedded pair than that they should observe the laws of the country and give citizens to the State, a marriage which is always menaced by divorce as a sadly possible corollary, and which paves the way for the family education and children which we are too often pained to behold.

But let us turn our minds from these deplorable thoughts, let us bless the church of Jesus Christ for the jealous care with which she guards the dignity of humanity; let us bless the inflexible purity of her morality as well as the beauty and holiness of her sacraments, and let us close this great subject by gathering from her lips the highest and chastest instructions which she gives to the wedded pair when the solemn moment has come.

It is another voice than the voice of the mortal priest which she borrows to repeat this to them; and how admirable it is in the midst of the noise of mundane joys, and among all the plaudits of earth, — how admirable it is suddenly to hear the voice of the holy books interrupt the holy sacrifice at the most solemn moment to pronounce in the midst of the holy mysteries in a heavenly language unknown to earth, but visible on high, these grave and pure words.

"It is truly just and equitable and salu-

tary, to return thanks to Thee at all times, and in all places, most holy Lord, all powerful Father, eternal God: Thou who by Thy sovereign power hast brought all things out of nothing, and who, after having created man to Thy image, hast united him so inseparably to his companion, that the body of his spouse was produced from the same substance as man himself, to teach them, that it will never be permitted to separate that which, after Thy will and institution, was but one in the beginning.

"O God! who hast consecrated the union of this pair by a mystery so excellent that their alliance represents the sacred union of Jesus Christ with His Church! Oh, God! by whom the woman is united to the man, Thou who hast given to this association the most essential of all, a blessing of such a character that neither the punishment of original sin, nor the chastisement of the human race by the deluge could destroy it! Oh God! who alone holdest in Thy hands all hearts, Thou whose Providence knows and powerfully rules all things, in such wise, that nothing can separate what Thou hast united, nor render unhappy what Thou blestest, unite we conjure Thee, the souls of these spouses who are Thy servants: inspire their hearts with a sincere and mutual affection that they may be but one in Thee as Thou art one;

Thou the only true and all powerful God. Look with goodness upon Thy servant here present, who at the moment of being united to her bridegroom, fervently entreats of Thee the assistance of Thy protection. May the yoke she imposes upon herself be to her a yoke of love and peace; chaste and faithful may she be wedded in Jesus Christ, and follow the example of the holy women! May she be loving to her husband as Rachel, and wise as Rebecca; may she enjoy long life, and be faithful as Sarah! May there never be anything in her that comes from the author of sin. May she always live strongly attached to the faith and the practice of Thy commandments; may she, inseparably joined to her one spouse, deny herself all that is forbidden; may she sustain her natural weakness with the firmness of virtue; may she be worthy of respect for her gentle gravity, and venerated for her modesty; may she be adorned by celestial doctrines; may she obtain of Thee a happy fruitfulness; may she always be innocent and pure; in order that she may attain to the repose of the most blessed and the kingdom of glory. And may both see, one day, the children of their children to the third and fourth generations, and may they thus reach a happy old age through our Savior Jesus Christ!"

At Constantinople, Refik Bey, Chief of the Translation Office in the Foreign Department, has opened a course of lessons in French, for the instruction of the Treasury employes. The *Levant Herald* reports that 180 have already joined, and it is said that henceforth French is to form part of the preliminary examination. It is to be expected that, as is not uncommon with the Turkish politicians, other motives than simple compliance with Western civilization have their influence.

Persons engaged in any vocation of an intellectual character should have opportunities of refreshing their minds and acquiring new ideas. The long vacations at our public schools enable the masters to keep abreast of the world, and well in advance of their pupils. Doubtless, in the old days, the cathedral was a place whereto the parochial clergy were wont to resort, to learn the right defence against the new heresies. Country doctors, we take it, would be far more efficient if they could come to town and walk the hospitals again every three or four years. Medicine is not a science, nor ever will be, unless

some one discovers what *life* is; but medicine, as an art, is of remarkably rapid growth. Every day there seem to be new modes of treatment, new chemical combinations, new instruments of surgery. Of these things the country practitioner has no knowledge. Hence, if you have the ill-fortune to be taken ill at a distance from London, you had better at once telegraph for your medical adviser. In some parts of England the doctors are so far behind the day, that you might almost as safely be taken ill in Italy.

The Graphic.

In M. de Sainte-Beuve's library is a copy of the collected poems of Fontannes. Before he attracted the attention of the First Consul, Fontannes had prepared the edition; but fearing his poems might interfere with the political career he was entering on, he suppressed the edition, and few copies seem to have escaped; perhaps M. de Sainte-Beuve's is the only one. Another treasure is a copy of Chateaubriand's "*Essai sur les Révolutions*," with notes and corrections, intended by the author for a second edition, which never appeared.

CHAPTER IV.

A REUNION.

THE four days in Plymouth had slipped quickly away. To-morrow the brother and sister were to return to Shilston Hall and join Lady Laura, who was anxiously expecting her son. This was therefore Audrey's last day of freedom. They had made the most of the time, and it had passed away so speedily and happily, and left so many pleasant memories, that Audrey declared that if she could marry for love she would spend her honeymoon in Plymouth. Not that they had done much sight-seeing in a place where the lover of fair nature has but one complaint, an *embarras de richesses*. Captain Verschoyle, in after days, often spoke to her of that week at Plymouth, where she was as gay as a happy girl, and as artless and naive as a thoughtless child. She would talk to the old boatmen, and listen with delight to their yarns, and would enter into conversation with any man, woman, or child who chanced to come in her way, and be as triumphantly pleased with the evident admiration she excited in some rough old salt or military pensioner, as if they had been eligible *partis*, with rank and wealth to lay at the feet of their charmer.

"Audrey," said Charles to her after one of these happy excursions, "I have often heard that you were charming, but if people only saw you just now, they would say you were irresistible."

Whereupon she made him a sweeping curtsy, declaring that she believed it, for it was the first compliment he had ever paid her in his life. "But," she went on, "I have often thought that I might have been really nice, if I had not been brought up to show the right side, and feel the wrong side, of everything. The last few days have made me rather inclined to envy those whom ambition does not tempt to any other than a simple life of domestic contentment. It must be very pleasant to feel you have a companion for your whole life, one whom you love so well that you are truly content to take and be taken 'for better and for worse.' Ah, I see you are elevating your eyebrows, sir, and no wonder, when you are listening to such treason from the lips of your mentor. But pray don't inform against me. I promise to leave all my romance behind me here. And now, how shall we employ this last day?"

"I thought we should drive round Plymouth, and then I could make the inquiries I want to make at the Custom-house. I am rather anxious about those boxes; they are

filled with curiosities and relics that I set much value upon."

Accordingly they set off and soon found themselves going over the bridge and through the toll-gate, whose keeper had given Captain Verschoyle his round-about direction. The sight of the man reminded him of that evening's adventure, and he began to relate the circumstances to his sister. Audrey was quite interested in his description of the bright-looking, motherly shopkeeper, and her daughter, and asked him to give her a minute detail of all that happened.

"And the girl was very pretty?" said she, answering her brother with a question.

"Well," replied Captain Verschoyle, "I hardly know; her prim quaintness struck me so much more than anything else. Her *tout ensemble* certainly made a charming picture, but how much was due to her good looks I really cannot say. You know she was totally unlike anything I ever saw before."

"How I should like to see her!" exclaimed Audrey. "Could you not call, and say you were much better, and felt you could not leave Plymouth without again thanking them for their kindness?"

"Oh, I don't know," said her brother, "it's hardly worth while, and she might not strike you at all in the same way; *minus* crinoline and colours, you might think her dowdy and old-fashioned."

"No, I should not," answered Audrey, "and if I did it would make no difference. My curiosity would be satisfied, so do go, Charlie. I really think you should, for they were very good to you."

"Yes, they were indeed," replied Captain Verschoyle. "Suppose I were to take a bunch of flowers to the girl. I saw some on the table, I remember; and you being with me, it would seem all right. I want them to think that I have come to *thank* them, not from any other motive."

Upon this the coachman was told to stop at any shop where he saw flowers for sale. They had not left the Union Road before Audrey had selected a rather large bouquet formed of roses and lilies.

"I wish we could have got something better," said Captain Verschoyle.

"Yes, I wish so too; but it will please them. Marshall would call it lovely—those sort of people always favour quantity rather than quality."

They had soon passed St. Andrew's Church and the Post-office, Audrey commenting on the smart shops and the gaily-dressed pedestrians, and admiring the

pretty smiling girls, with their dark eyes and bright fresh complexions. The old Guildhall came in sight, and opposite it the fat gilt lamb dangling over the name of Nathaniel Fox, "woollen draper and manufacturer." Here they drew up and descended, and entering the shop, inquired if Mrs. Fox were at home.

"Yes," replied Mark, thinking the question applied to her return from Exeter.

"Could I see her?" said Captain Verschoyle.

"And Miss Fox?" put in Audrey.

"They're not here," answered Mark; "they're at King's-heart, where they keep house;" then seeing that Miss Verschoyle looked rather disappointed, he continued, "But if thou came to see them thou wilt go on there surely, or they'll be main disappointed. Now thou art on the road, 'tis but a step."

"Yes; let us go, Charles," said Audrey; and then seeing her brother hesitate, she addressed Mark, asking him if it was far, and begging him to repeat the name of the place.

"Perhaps you would explain it to the coachman," she continued, "for we are strangers here, and know nothing of the roads."

Mark's explanation was very brief, for the man knew the house, and was soon driving up to it, Captain Verschoyle feeling very much inclined to turn back. But he was overruled by Audrey's curiosity; and as they had nothing else to do, and the country began to look very pretty, he soon felt more at ease.

At the top of the lane they got out of the fly, the man telling them to walk on until they came to a white gate, where they could either ring or walk in. The high hedge and the trees formed such a complete screen from the road that it was impossible to catch a glimpse of the house; and as they stood admiring the prospect Lydia answered their summons. She said Mrs. Fox was at home, and bade them follow her. Somehow, before they had gone half way up the path, Captain Verschoyle heartily wished himself anywhere else. Audrey tried to whisper that they had certainly made a mistake, and they were both reflecting what they had better do, when Lydia opened a door, and announced Captain and Miss Verschoyle.

The room into which they were shown was always called the sitting-room, though it answered to the drawing-room of upper middle-class families. It was prettily and lightly furnished, and bore about it evidence of being intended for home use, while the

flowers arranged in different stands and vases spoke of refined taste and feminine influence. Patience was seated before a half-finished painting of a group of tall white lilies, giving Dorothy the benefit of her criticism, as the girl knelt at her side listening with delighted face to the praise her mother had to bestow.

When the door opened there was a momentary look of surprise on both their faces, and then Dorothy, coming forward with a perfectly natural but pretty shy manner, held out her hand to Captain Verschoyle, saying, "I am glad to see thee looking so well again."

Poor Charles! I fear his first impulse was to turn round and soundly rate Audrey for allowing her curiosity to bring him into this dilemma. One glance at the occupants of the room told him the relationship in which they stood towards each other, and revealed the evident mistake he had made. He could not explain it now, and say that he had considered that homely-looking person the mother of this girl, who, among these surroundings, looked much more refined than he had in their first interview thought her.

"This is my mother," continued Dorothy, as Patience advanced towards them.

Captain Verschoyle was not naturally oppressed with bashfulness or awkwardness, but on this occasion no youth raw from a remote country district could have felt more confused. Audrey was so much amused at the appearance he presented, as he stood there trying to stammer out something, the enormous nosegay all the while in his hand, that it required a violent effort on her part to keep from bursting into a fit of laughter. But she restrained herself, and came to the rescue by saying—

"Mrs. Fox, you will pardon this intrusion, I am sure. My brother and I felt your kindness to him was so great, that our gratitude would not permit us to leave Plymouth without thanking you for it."

"I am very pleased to see thee," said Patience; then, turning to Captain Verschoyle, she continued, "The mistake thou made in taking Judith for Dorothy's mother was a natural one, and Judith is so valued by us all, that I appreciate the intention which made thee come so far to thank her, quite as much as if thy visit had been meant for myself."

Patience little knew how her unstudied speech, prompted entirely by the wish to set the young man at ease, raised her at once in Miss Verschoyle's opinion.

"How well done!" she thought; "that woman has breeding in her, though she

may be the daughter of a thousand shopkeepers."

Captain Verschoyle began to recover himself, and by the time Dorothy had relieved him of his floral burden, saying, "What beautiful lilies! I was wishing I had some more this morning," he had found his courage again; and feeling the truth had best be told, he said that he had got them for her, thinking that she lived in the town, and would perhaps accept them, and excuse the pooriness of his offering. They were soon perfectly at home, Patience listening to an account of Captain Verschoyle's subsequent illness, and Dorothy showing Audrey the flower painting she was engaged upon. Audrey thought she had never before seen anything so pretty as the child's artless manner, so self-possessed and yet so simple. She readily assented to Dorothy's proposal that they should go over the garden, and Captain Verschoyle and Patience got up to follow them.

"But," said Audrey, "you will get a hat or bonnet first."

"Oh, no; I never do."

"Why, you will spoil your complexion; which would be a pity, for it is beautiful."

"Is it?" answered Dorothy.

Audrey laughed; here certainly was a *rara avis* — a girl who was unconscious of the charms she possessed. Audrey wondered whether she was the happier for it, and if her whole demeanour could be relied upon. She was the embodiment of happiness, and yet what capabilities of improvement she possessed! If her hair were simply but fashionably arranged, and if she had an elegant white toilette, she would be the perfection of her style. And then Audrey mentally conjured up a reflection of her own figure clothed in grey, with the white net kerchief crossed over her bosom, and all her hair taken back from her face and fastened into a knot at the back of her head.

"I should look simply hideous," she thought. "What a providence I am not condemned to belong to the Quaker persuasion!"

"What art thou showing Audrey Verschoyle, dearest?" said Patience; then seeing the surprised look on Audrey's face, she added, "Thou must not think me familiar in thus naming thee, but it is against our principles to give persons the title of Miss or Mr."

"Familiar! indeed no, Mrs. Fox; I was just looking at this yew tree so curiously cut."

"Yes, they call it 'Charles's heart,' and say the poor man once stood by it in much sorrow. Dorothy will tell thee long his-

tories of all he did during his stay at Widey, for he is her favourite hero of romance."

"Hardly that, mother; but I feel so sorry for him; and so dost thou, too."

"Yes," answered Patience; "still I always blame him for want of truthfulness. He relied, I fear, on one of the world's supports — cunning, a very broken reed to all who try its strength."

"Ah, but, Mrs. Fox," said Audrey, "remember he lived in an atmosphere where, as in the world of the present day, a little deceit is pardonable, and strict truth would be not only unpalatable, but unwholesome, inasmuch as it would cause you to disagree with every one."

"Thou dost not quite mean that," replied Patience, "or I should form a bad opinion of the world."

"And do you not think badly of us?" questioned Audrey, laughing.

"I hope not," returned Patience. "Of course, thou must know that in the quiet life I lead, many of the things I hear I must condemn; but then it is the folly I censure, not individually those who enter into it. How could I presume to do that, when, were it not for a goodness that has placed me beyond those particular temptations, my weak human nature might be as powerless to resist as theirs whom I should be censuring?"

"Mrs. Fox," said Captain Verschoyle, "you put a quiet life very pleasantly before us."

"Do I?" she answered; "and yet I sometimes hope that Dorothy may see more of the world than I have had an opportunity of seeing. I do not hold a choice made through ignorance so highly as I should one made after the person had in a measure tested the value of what was given up; and just now a great agitation is working in the minds of Friends, whether it would not be expedient to give more freedom of action to members of the society. Many regard the movement with favour, while others cling to the customs of their fathers. My husband is one of those who deplore any innovation, so, of course, we carry out his views; though I cannot say it would be against my conscience to do many things which I refrain from doing just because I know his conscience would condemn them. And now thou wilt come into the house and partake of some refreshment before starting?"

Audrey hesitated.

"Oh, thou must come," said Dorothy.

"I should like very much to do so," answered Audrey, "did I not fear we were almost trespassing on your hospitality."

"Do not fear that," said Patience, smiling. "Thou knows it is our custom only

to say what we mean; therefore thy staying will give us pleasure."

"Then I am sure we will not deny ourselves such a pleasure," added Captain Verschoyle.

And on this they all went back to the house to partake of tea and fruit and cake. They sat some time longer talking of paintings and flowers, and of many subjects on which Charles and Audrey seldom spoke. Captain Verschoyle gave them some descriptions of the Crimea — of the sufferings and bravery of the men, and of the fortitude with which some had heard their death-warrant, when life would have given them the fame to gain which they had risked all they held dear. He spoke more particularly of one of his own especial friends, and of the influence his life and death had had upon his men. Patience at length confessed to herself that she felt greatly drawn towards him, and thought how proud his mother must be of such a son; for Charles Verschoyle had that gentle suavity of manner which, while it attracts all, particularly appeals to women who feel that their youth no longer claims the attention and thoughtfulness due to their sex.

They were all reluctant to say good-bye; and, standing together at the white gate, any one would have been surprised to hear that they were friends of only a few hours' standing.

"Farewell," said Patience to Audrey. "I shall often think of thee."

"And I of you," she answered. "The thought will do me good — as you yourself would do could I see more of you." Then turning to Dorothy, and meeting her loving, earnest eyes, Audrey, giving way to a most unusual impulse, took the sweet face in both her hands, and kissed her on both cheeks. Captain Verschoyle meanwhile, bade a lingering adieu to Patience.

"Farewell," she said; "I am glad we have met, should it never be our lot to meet again. In all thy warfare, may thou be protected."

"Thank you heartily: but I will not think this is to be our only meeting. Should I ever come to Plymouth again, you will, I know, give me permission to call and see you. Good-bye, Miss Fox, I have not expressed half my gratitude to you for your charitable kindness."

One more look round to see the mother and daughter, as they stood together, the declining rays of the sun lingering about the pathway where they stood, and lovingly resting on them, and Audrey and Charles Verschoyle turned their faces towards Plymouth. The driver (who had been well

cared for) touched up his horse, and they were soon well on the road again.

"Charles," said Audrey, breaking the silence, "I never in my life-time felt so old and world-worn, nor felt such a desire to be different from what I am. Now I know what happiness means! Something born of a great heart — too pure, too truthful, too charitable to see aught but the best of people, and which, as it daily grows and strengthens, fills its owner with inward peace and perfect content! Oh, I have so enjoyed this afternoon! I feel, if I were a man, I should like to marry that girl."

"And I," answered her brother, "should like to marry the mother. For such a wife I could give up everything, and feel perfectly contented."

"Yes, she is certainly charming; but so they both are, and their manners are perfect. While I was watching them, I could but make some rather humiliating comparisons. Here was I pluming myself on my wonderful good breeding, the result of birth and society, and I come suddenly upon the wife and daughter of a country shopkeeper, who tell you that they have hardly ever been beyond the town they live in, and never mixed with other society than the members of their own community, and yet the self-possession and graceful tact of the mother, when she covered your confusion at an awkward mistake by turning it at once into an attention paid to her family, and the pretty way in which the daughter told you that the flowers were just those she had been wishing for, might have been envied by a duchess."

"Quite so," said her brother; "the true thing evidently springs from some other source than 'blue blood' alone."

"I was very nearly endangering every claim I possess to good breeding," exclaimed Audrey. "I really thought I must have had a fit of laughter at you, Charlie. You have no idea of the ridiculous figure you presented with that enormous nosegay; only the geese were wanting to make the representation of the 'Bashful Swain' complete."

Captain Verschoyle laughed. "Well, certainly," he said, "I never felt more completely disconcerted in my life, and the worst of it was, I could think of nothing to say."

"Fancy, Charlie, if mamma could have seen her son *hors de combat* before a shopkeeper's wife!"

"Ah! poor mamma!" replied Captain Verschoyle, "she has a good many things to be shocked at yet."

"I cannot think," continued Audrey,

"why you were so little impressed with the girl's beauty; to me she is lovely. She made me feel so old, and filled me with a desire to caress her and pet her and indulge her."

"She is very much prettier than I thought her," answered her brother; "before, I principally admired her quaint childishness."

"Yes," said Audrey, "but that is only in her pretty half shy manner and appearance; she can talk extremely well."

"Can she?" replied Captain Verschoyle absently.

"Of course she can," exclaimed Audrey, "but you were so taken up with her mother that I don't believe you spoke ten words to her. However, it didn't matter, for I saw she admired me much more than she did you."

"Then all was as it should be, and we got an equal division of pleasure. I wonder what the father is like."

"Oh, vulgar, I daresay," replied Audrey.

"And I dare say not," returned her brother; "peculiar he may be, disagreeable perhaps, but the husband of that woman could not continue vulgar."

"No, you are right, Charles," answered Audrey, "and I only wish I could see them often. I know they would do me good, and keep down that 'envy, hatred, and malice' which poisons much of my better nature. This afternoon's visit is the delightful termination to our holiday. Say you have enjoyed the last week, Charlie dear, for I don't believe I was ever so happy in my life before."

Next morning they took their departure reluctantly. Marshall quite entered into their regret, for, in addition to the scenery, she left behind the landlady's son, home from sea, who, "though a little free in speech and rough in voice, was a tender, kind-hearted creature." Moreover, he was so attentive to "Miss Marshall," that she hardly knew what to think of his intentions. At parting he had given her a white satin heart-shaped pincushion, worked with beads, and had told her to accept it as emblematic, though his own heart was not so hard. So it had been a happy week to all of them, and as the train carried them beyond the possibility of another glimpse of the old town of Plymouth, they sighed that it was over.

Lady Laura was at St. Thomas's station to meet them, and it rejoiced Captain Verschoyle's heart to see the tears of joy in his mother's eyes, and her contented look, as with her hand in his they drove to Shilston Hall.

"Miss Brocklehurst will be so pleased to see you both," said Lady Laura. "She has talked so much about you, that some of those horrid toadies of cousins have gone away in disgust. I am very glad now that Audrey went to you, Charlie, although I endured agonies after she had left, fearing that she might catch some fever or dreadful complaint. You know, my dearest boy, nothing but the certainty that it would have been death to me, in my weak state, to have gone to such a place prevented me flying to you. It was a dreadful trial to remain here. And it was so thoughtful of you to stay away these two days longer, and have all your clothes thoroughly exposed to the air. My anxiety for your return prevented my suggesting such a thing."

"Do you intend staying here much longer, mamma?" interrupted Audrey.

"I think not," answered Lady Laura.

"We are due at Dyne Court the beginning of next month, and I want to stay in town for a few days before we go there. However, Charles shall decide, and I shall be governed by him."

"Oh no, mother," said Captain Verschoyle, "I do not want any of the bother of pre-eminence. You and Audrey must manage everything for me, and I shall be content to follow out any plans made for me."

"Very well," returned his mother, delightedly. "If you throw the onus of management upon me, I think I may answer that you will have no cause for complaint. I have several pet schemes on hand which I think you will approve of, and before next season comes I hope you will both be well established, and independent of everybody." At this point Lady Laura gave a sigh; and then, meeting her son's eyes, pressed his hand, exclaiming, "I have not told you half what I suffered while you were away, nor how thankful I feel to have you with me once more."

CHAPTER V.

THE CREWDSONS.

JOSIAH CREWDSON was a cloth-merchant of Leeds, where for many years his family had held a good position, and were esteemed and respected by their fellow-townsmen. They adhered closely to the manners and customs of the sect to which they belonged. Josiah therefore wore the dress almost universally adopted by strict Friends. His coat, retaining its swallow tails, gave way a little in the matter of the old straight collar, which a lining of velvet, turned down, served partly to hide; and instead of a white cra-

vat, he adopted a scarf of black silk or satin; but with these exceptions his costume was in all respects that of the old school.

In appearance Josiah was short and broad set, with ruddy whiskerless face, and an undue amount of colour, which seemed to deepen like a girl's on the smallest provocation. Had it not been for the excessive gravity of his speech and manner, he would have struck people as boyish. And boyish his face really was, although his figure might have belonged to a middle-aged man. Except when engaged in business, Josiah was painfully shy, and very sensitive as to his own personal defects. He greatly envied the ease of manner and fluency of speech which most men seemed naturally to possess; and he often wondered what could possibly make him so bashful and stupid. These two defects resulted entirely from the hard school in which his boyhood and youth had been passed.

His father, a stern, narrow-minded man, had certain fixed notions and plans on which he invariably acted, and for which he could give no better reason than that such was his rule. It was his rule, for instance, never to allow the smallest indulgence to his children, but to deny them every amusement. He punished each small offence, and magnified an omission into a glaring fault. He condemned all lightness of heart, and called all manifestation of tenderness nonsensical and ridiculous. His two daughters, who were many years older than Josiah, were cast in the same mould as their father. To them, it was no hard task to obey regulations which exactly fitted in with their own cramped views.

But Josiah was not a Crewdson. He took after the mother, who had died when he was born; and for this abominable want of sense the family never entirely forgave him.

Surrounded by all the comforts of life, the Crewdsons ought to have been a cheerful, happy family; instead of which they were dull and gloomy. The silence of a prison seemed to reign over them. They seldom met save at meals, where conversation was strictly forbidden. Except to ask for what they needed, not a voice was raised. Directly the business of eating was over, all the members were expected to occupy themselves immediately with their duties. Amusements were regarded as contemptible snares, which old Crewdson said were not needed by rational beings. If, therefore, Josiah, as a boy, interested himself in any little diversion which in the case of one differently brought up would

have been extremely tame and uninteresting, Jemima or Kezia were down upon him, and if he did not at once relinquish his newly-found hobby, woe betide him. Thus was he kept in utter subjection; his spirit curbed, his geniality suppressed, his tongue tied, and his whole nature turned, as it were, from its natural source and diverted into the groove which his father had laid down for it. And when old Crewdson died, people wondered why Josiah continued just the same man, permitting his two sisters to rule his household and lecture and snub him as they had done all his lifetime. They forgot that twenty-five years of brow-beating leaves such an amount of bashfulness and spiritlessness, that unless a man turn at once into a bully and a tyrant, many years will hardly suffice to remove it. In one thing Josiah's father had not laboured in vain, and that was to make his son a thorough man of business. Josiah's capacity for business was the only thing the old man appreciated in him. The lad soon saw that on this ground they met on an equal footing, that his diffidence gave way, and his natural good sense had full swing. He showed such undoubted talent that for some years before his father's death the entire management had almost fallen into his hands, and the trade, which was very considerable, had steadily increased. Josiah was accordingly looked upon as one of the wealthiest and most prosperous of the younger members belonging to the Society of Friends.

Between the Crewdsons and the Foxes there had always been a close intimacy, and it was the wish of Nathaniel Fox and old Stephen Crewdson, that this bond might be still further strengthened by the ultimate marriage of Dorothy and Josiah. Josiah had not seen Dorothy since she was a girl of fourteen. But even then he quite regarded her as his destined future wife; and many people would have been somewhat surprised to know that this sedate-looking man, who was apparently engrossed in his business (for besides being a cloth merchant, he was a railway and bank director), looked forward with the greatest satisfaction to the time when a sweet young wife would lovingly greet his return and brighten his home, taking the place of the two gaunt figures, who, seated on the stiffest of horse-hair chairs, and clothed in the most terribly severe coloured alpaca, now considered it their duty to bear their testimony and uphold their principles whenever he proposed anything pleasant or a little contrary to their established customs. Yes, the fact was that Josiah's warm answers were often checked by the thought that very soon the

whole domestic arrangements would be changed.

The proposed alliance between their brother and Dorothy Fox was of course no secret to the Miss Crewdsons. As it had been an arrangement of their father's, they entirely approved of it. In common with most of the leading Friends, they considered it an excellent and sensible union, and one which it was now almost high time to bring to a conclusion. Dorothy was nineteen, and twenty-one was considered a fitting age for a maiden to become a wife. Two years would thus be given for a more open engagement, and then the necessary preparation for settling would all be properly gone about; for nothing done in haste could, according to the Crewdson ideas, be performed with that decency and order which befitted Friends.

The thought that it was high time these two young people should see a little more of each other had also entered Nathaniel Fox's head. Therefore it was fixed, after a consultation with his wife, that an invitation should be sent to Josiah, requesting him to spend a short time at Plymouth. Nathaniel said he knew his friend was too much occupied to make a long stay, but the more time he could give them the better pleased they should be.

Josiah readily accepted the invitation; and it was with no little excitement that he was now looking forward to seeing his future wife. He began to arrange matters so that he might pay a visit to Exeter on the way, and be present at a wedding to which he had been invited, and which was about to take place between John Cash, his cousin, and Elizabeth Dymond, a relative of the Foxes. He knew Dorothy had been asked to assist as bridesmaid; but no sooner had Nathaniel heard that Elizabeth was to be adorned in a white lace veil and an orange wreath, while her bridesmaids were to keep her company in coloured dresses and bonnets, than he sternly refused his consent to her going. He said he would as soon that his daughter should exhibit herself before a booth at Plymouth fair, as take part in such a raree-show.

Jemima and Kezia Crewdson of course were as severe in their censure. They told Josiah that he, too, ought to bear his testimony against such worldly wickedness by refusing to be present; but a letter from Nathaniel, in which he begged Josiah to go, and seize the opportunity of rebuking the wedding party, had altered their tone. They now employed every moment they were with their brother repeating to him the various remarks that had occurred to them

as suitable for him to say, and which were calculated most effectually to damp all cheerfulness and hilarity.

Josiah, however, had not the slightest intention of saying one word of rebuke. He was too painfully alive to his own awkwardness and shyness to contemplate standing up before a number of people, many of them strangers to him, and delivering himself of a caustic speech. But as his habit was, he silently listened to all their conversation, not even indulging in a yes or no, unless absolutely compelled.

He was to start the next morning very early, so he sat attentively while Jemima, who had packed up his things, gave him the necessary information as to the reasons which had made her apparently collect together the most incongruous assortment of material. It was rather amusing to see these two women regarding their business-like brother as utterly incapable. They had done so when he was a schoolboy, and so they did now. They packed his box for him, and they put up his parcels; but when Kezia commenced to give him various hints as to his mode of conduct towards Dorothy, it became too ridiculous, and Josiah was obliged to return her a mild reproof.

"Thank thee, Kezia, but, doubtless, when the time comes I shall find words to make myself agreeable to Dorothy."

"That speech is somewhat self-sufficient, Josiah," answered Jemima, immediately taking up the cudgels for her sister—"a fault our father always warned thee especially to guard against. Kezia's remark was a just one; and Dorothy Fox, if she is what I take her to be, is too earnest an upholder of our principles to be caught by frivolous words and worldly phrases."

Josiah knew that any answer would only draw him into an argument in which he was certain to come off worst, so he made no further comment, but promised to deliver all the messages he was charged with, particularly to tell Patience Fox that they would be pleased to have a visit from Dorothy, in order that they might become better acquainted. Then they bade him farewell, and hoped, grimly, that he would enjoy himself.

"Thank thee," returned Josiah, "I think I shall. This is the first holiday I have had for so long that I shall do my best to make it pleasant."

"Well," said Jemima, with a gloomy nod of the head, "I wish it may turn out so."

"One would not give credit to thy wish by thy face," laughed Josiah, for the prospect of the change had raised his spirits,

and made him unusually talkative and bold. The sisters looked at each other, as though they said, "If he was going to see the Foxes in this spirit, what will Dorothy think of him?"

"There is one thing thou shouldst bear in mind, Josiah," said Kezia, looking with her most severe aspect; "and that is, that flippancy of speech leads to much error, and is against the principles thou hast been taught to obey."

"Yes; and it was a thing our father especially warned thee against," added Jemima. "I have often heard him say, that even a fool when he was silent was counted a wise man." With which flattering remark, Josiah was left to his own reflections.

CHAPTER VI.

HER LADYSHIP'S PLANS.

LADY LAURA VERSCHOYLE'S house was a small excrescence on a sort of by-way which connected a fashionable London square with a fashionable London street. Lady Laura always spoke of her house as 27, Egmont Street, which was true, only it would have been more correct to have said 27A, Egmont Street. The letter A seemed a very trifling addition, yet the difference that such a small sign indicated between the houses was somewhat startling; for whereas No. 27, Egmont Street, would have been termed "that desirable family mansion," and was the town house of a baronet with £15,000 a-year, 27A, Egmont Street, would have been advertised as "an elegant bijou residence," and was the sole dwelling-place of Lady Laura Verschoyle, who on £1,500 a-year found it very difficult to compete with her more fortunate neighbours. Had she been contented to live on the other side of the Park, she might have had a cheerful, comfortable house instead of this inconvenient one, where, to make a tolerably good reception room, all the other apartments had been robbed of their height or breadth. 27A had a most cheerless prospect, the front being shadowed by the high garden wall of a grand house which looked into the Park. All the back windows were frosted over, that no glimpse might be caught of the mews into which they opened. Taking it as a whole, it would have been difficult to find a like rented abode with so little to recommend it besides what was to Lady Laura its all-powerful attraction—the fact of its being situated in one of the most fashionable localities of London.

The jesting, laughing, and quarrelling which Lady Laura could not help hearing from the back could not offend her so much

when she remembered that it came from the grooms or coachmen of a marquis or an earl; and though the chief passers by were footmen, pages, or tradesmen's porters, they were all either going to or coming from some grand house, and so found more favour in Lady Laura's eyes than the fine stalwart sons and fresh pretty daughters of "those middle-class people who are always trying to seem better than they are" would have done.

Lady Laura, with her son and daughter, had left Shilton Hall the day before, and arrived at her house in Egmont Street, intending to spend a few days there, and then go on to Dyne Court. The horses were turned out; the footman and housemaid were away on board wages, and only the cook (with her niece from the country) remained of the usual household. The curtains had been all taken down, and the furniture covered up for the summer; and as the family were only going to stay a short time, Lady Laura had not thought it necessary to have more than the dining-room got ready. They could manage, she said, without the expense of recalling the other servants. Certainly on this occasion, circumstances were very much against 27A, Egmont Street, looking the least like a house speaking of welcome and an invitation to settle down and enjoy the quiet pleasures of life.

So, at least, thought Captain Verschoyle as he descended rather earlier than cook had expected the morning after their arrival. The close heat and the active habits of the inhabitants of the Mews had driven sleep from his eyes at a very early hour, and he now somewhat ruefully surveyed the small uncomfortable room as the woman made as hasty a retreat as possible, apologising for being so late, and promising breakfast as soon as it could be got ready.

"What an awfully dingy place this is!" thought he; "how can they exist here? I don't wonder at that poor girl wanting to get married. Well! I hope when I have a wife I shall have a better home than this; although she must help to provide it, for I have not much more than half my mother's income. I shall certainly look after this heiress Audrey was speaking of, for money is a considerable sweetener of life."

And then certain memories of his early days arose, when he had pictured a home and an angel to share it; and he smiled over these visions, so dimmed now. In books you might read of love's enduring through life; poets spoke of its standing strong unto death; but speaking from his own experience, he had never seen it stand

out before an elder son or wealthier man. Several times he had been deceived into thinking he had secured a love pure and fresh enough to withstand all other temptations, but he had been rudely awakened from his dream to find that his successful rival possessed the real "Open, sesame," to all women's hearts—a rent-roll or a cheque-book.

So he began to resolve that he would try the barter system, and see how much money his good looks and name and position could bring him. An uncle had left him an income of £700 a year independent of his mother, but, as he often ruefully said, it was impossible for him to think of marrying upon that. No, no; he would do as other men did. He would go in for money, and he might chance to get a nice girl, and if he didn't—why, she must go her way and he must go his. Then he jumped up suddenly and exclaimed, "What a bothersome nuisance poverty is! I wish I was not such an extravagant fellow; a good wife would be the saving of me, if she only loved me enough. She would soon make me ashamed of my selfishness, and I believe make me do anything to please her. I wonder why fate has never sent such a woman across my path? I suppose there are such treasures in the world."

Here his reflections were suddenly brought to an end by the entrance of his sister, who, hearing from Marshall that Captain Verschoyle was already in the dining-room, came hurrying down in her morning wrapper to keep him company at breakfast.

"Accept, my dear Charlie, this tribute to fraternal affection—the sight of your beloved and admired sister *minus* the adornment of person substituted by the modern Briton for the woad of their ancestors."

"I am delighted to see you under any circumstances," said Captain Verschoyle, "for I was just beginning to take a very rueful view of things in general."

"Ah, now you have just spoilt your compliment," laughed Audrey; "had you stopped at circumstances I should have tapped you on the shoulder, after the fashion of the stage coquette, and cried 'courtier;' as it is, romance has vanished, and I am merely regarded as a dispeller of 'the blues.' So ring the bell and we'll sit down to breakfast in the Darby and Joan style of everyday life."

As soon as the servant had departed Audrey made a little *moue* at the breakfast table and said,—

"This does not look well after Shilton, does it?"

"No," replied her brother; "but what

an awfully dismal place this is—so close and stuffy! Besides, I can hardly breathe."

"Poor old Charlie!" exclaimed Audrey, "it is too bad not to make home look its best to welcome you back. It is a most uncomfortable room, and just now it certainly looks its worst. Whenever I return from staying out, I always feel that we have the most inconvenient and the most dingy house in the world—a sham, my dear, like the part we play in life, and a hanger on to a grand locality, just as we are to our noble relations. Oh! when these things grate on me and rub me up the wrong way, as they so often do, is it any wonder that I turn idolater and worship mammon?"

"Well, no," returned Captain Verschoyle. "I feel with you. I do not believe either of us would shrink from good honest poverty, but it is the straining after what we cannot reach that frets one. I only wish that dear mother of ours would feel the same, and always say she cannot afford what really can give neither you nor her much pleasure."

"Ah! there it lies," said Audrey. "I have become so accustomed to deception that I sometimes ask, am I not cheating myself into an idea that I do not care for those very excitements which form the whole business of my life? No, I can only be sure of one thing insuring happiness, and that is money; and I intend to go to Dyne Court, armed to the teeth with charms to subdue its master, and come away only to return to it as its mistress—Mrs. Richard Ford. An aristocratic name, is it not? I hear mamma whispering to people, 'An old Windsor family, mentioned, if you recollect, by Shakespeare.' Let me see, Mrs. Ford was a merry wife—hum! But from the view I at present take of Mr. Richard Ford, his wife will be a merry widow."

Captain Verschoyle laughingly shook his head, saying, "Come, it is too bad to be sending the old gentleman off into the other world before you have got possession of him in this one. But how about my heiress? for I am thinking seriously of her; it is quite time I got married, and as you seem to think her ladylike and tractable, I will resign myself, and bid farewell to my early visions."

"What were *they*?" inquired Audrey.

"Oh, a home reigned over by an ideal creature, who was too ethereal to care for more than I could give her, and earthly enough to love, with all her heart, a stupid, common-place fellow like me."

"You dear old creature!" said Audrey. "Any woman might be proud of you; so

don't take such a very limited view of your mental and bodily advantages. Miss Selina Bingham will very readily listen to your suit, I am sure, as I should do if I had £50,000; but, being as I am, prudence would bid me take safety in flight from such a 'braw wooer.'"

"Audrey," said Captain Verschoyle, "I wonder if you are as mercenary as you would have me think. One thing I do not believe, and that is, that you ever were in love."

"No," replied his sister looking very serious. "Among all the slings and arrows which outrageous fortune has aimed at me, a merciful Providence has defended me from Love's bow. I cannot say," she continued, laughing, "that I have not felt the scratch of the arrow as it glanced off; and, slight as the wound has always been, it has just given me an idea of the force with which it *could* come. This has made me look to my breastplate, that I might render it invulnerable. But that was years ago, and I am tolerably safe in my own strength now, and think that I could hold a successful siege against the most fascinating younger son in England."

"Don't be too confident," said her brother. "Many a stronghold that has stoutly prepared itself for a siege has been taken by storm."

"My dear Charles, as your mother would say, do not be guilty of jesting on such a grave subject. *Appropos* of mamma, I have often thought over what line she would pursue if we were to marry poor nobodys. Of course, she would be furious, but I verily believe she would go about telling our friends that she was overjoyed, for she had always brought up her children to follow the dictates of their hearts."

"Come, come," replied Captain Verschoyle, "you are too hard on the poor *mater*."

"Indeed, I don't mean to be so," said Audrey. "But mamma, as a study, is perfect; she is so thorough in her cajolery. When I begin to be illusory I feel after a time that I should like to tell people the truth. My vanity wants to be gratified by showing how clever I am at deception. But it is not so with mamma. She believes in her fraud, and conveys it to others with such a semblance of truth, that sometimes even I am staggered. Don't look so shocked, Charlie, I do not mean to be untruthful; but this is the way I have been brought up. How can you expect me to have the faith which they say girls should have in their mothers, when the very first things I remember of mamma are, 'Don't

tell your papa such a thing,' or 'If Aunt Spencer asks you, you must say —' well — something quite opposed to the truth? However, it is mean of me to shelter myself under the cloak of my teaching; I ought rather to thank her for having given me this experience, so that if ever I have children, and cannot gain their love, I'll try to gain their respect. And sometimes," she added, with a sigh, "I think that is my last hope of being what I sometimes wish to be — a better woman. But, there, I really don't know — I am not worse than my neighbours; and with that very original and consolatory remark I will conclude my little speech, go and pay my *devoirs* to her ladyship, and take her maternal advice on the most becoming toilette to be worn at Dyne Court."

She left, and Captain Verschoyle began to consider what he had to do in London, and what he should want in the country. He had sent Hallett off on a holiday, and therefore felt that he ought to be busy packing, only he did not quite see what he wanted. So he, too, wandered to his mother's room, to seek her advice, which on all matters of dress and adornment was unquestionably good.

Lady Laura admitted her son after a little hesitation and scrambling about the room. He found her at breakfast, the different chairs being covered with dresses of various kinds, with hats, bonnets, and mantles which Marshall was consulting her about, as to this trimming being altered, or those flowers changed, so that they might better accord with the fashion of the new additions to the wardrobe.

She motioned Captain Verschoyle into a chair, saying: —

"In one minute, my dear, I'll attend to you."

Then, turning again to the maid, she went on with some final directions and suggestions, after which she dismissed her, and threw herself back in her chair, saying in a piteous tone: —

"Oh, my dear Charles, I devoutly hope this plan for Audrey will succeed, for it is getting more than my strength will bear to be constantly contriving that her dress shall appear as various and fresh as that of the girls we meet out. You know I should be dead to feeling did it not pain me to have her still on my hands. Considering the advantages and opportunities she has had, and the efforts I have made, it is *wonderful* to me that she is not married. When I look round and see the plain, common-place girls (with mothers who have not seemed to care a pin who they talked to or danced

with) married, and married well too, and all since Audrey came out—well! it only shows one that there must be some higher power than ours moving in such matters."

"She'll get married yet, mother," answered her son. "I am certainly surprised at her being single still; but, perhaps, you have expected too much for her. Who is this man we're going to visit now, and where did you meet him?"

"We met him last Christmas at the Bouveries," replied her ladyship. "Audrey took part in some charades and tableaux they got up, and he so admired her, and paid her so much attention, that I quite thought he would have proposed then; but not being able to find out everything about him, I did not encourage him so much as I should now. He is quite a millionaire; and Dyne Court is a lovely place. He said then that he hoped we would come and see him in the summer, when this new place, which he had recently bought, and which was then undergoing extensive alterations, would be ready; and about six weeks since I had a letter begging me to fix my time, and he would then ask a few people to meet us."

"So you thought that looked like business," laughed her son.

"Coming from such a man, I did. He's quite one of those new people," continued Lady Laura; "but so sensible—he couldn't at first believe that I was Audrey's mother. I have quite forgotten now how he made his money, but I daresay it was by brewing, or Manchester, perhaps; and it's quite the

fashion for good families to marry those sort of people, provided they are *very wealthy*."

"But," said Captain Verschoyle, "he must be a great deal older than Audrey."

"Well, yes, there is a difference certainly, still nothing to speak of. I almost wish he would wear a wig, for being so bald makes him look rather old. However, when they are married it won't make any difference, and if Audrey cared for him to look younger I should suggest the wig; but I don't think she will trouble herself about him then, and he is certainly not older than Lord Totnes was, nor Lady Gwendoline Farnham's husband."

"I hope he's presentable," exclaimed Captain Verschoyle.

"Oh dear, yes!" answered his mother.

"Of course you must be prepared for the manner of the British merchant—honest and bluff; but many people like that now. I remember Lord Tewkesbury saying that nothing pleased him better. However, you will soon be able to judge for yourself. We shall leave on Thursday morning, and I hope we shall all enjoy our visit, for Audrey is not the only one I have formed plans for. The welfare of my children is always next my heart, my dear Charles; and if I could see you both well married, with good establishments, such as your family and position entitle you to expect, I could sink into comparative insignificance, feeling that I had carried out and accomplished my work in life, and had not lived in vain."

Does any one ever reckon the waste of mental and corporeal energy which is represented by the superfluous noise of a great town? To listen to the great hum of London in the dusk of the evening, in some spot not liable to any acute sounds, is as suggestive and as mysterious as trying to fathom and analyse the murmurs resounding in a sea-born shell; and if we may believe the learned ones, this arises from the same cause—the collection and intermingling of many faintly-heard echoes. But to hear those same sounds from their very midst, to have each clamouring more violently than its fellow for entrance into our brain, how much labour does it not involve upon that easily-tired organ, to which it ought not to be liable? Railways with their whistles, their fog-signals, their grinding of iron on iron, their constant shocks, the banging of doors, the hoarse, unintelligible screaming of porters, are becoming more and

more part of the hourly life of a Londoner. Beside these, our streets have since Hogarth's day become far noisier; first Macadamised roads, and now granite, worn down with overwhelming crowds of vehicles of all weights, going at all kinds of paces. These drown the minor abominations of organ-grinders and street bands, that would otherwise make the words we are reading or writing waltz before us, or would connect our most serious thoughts with that most dreary of all inventions, a comic song. Surely we may welcome anything that will mitigate the torture our nerves undergo from these causes, and not the less when we consider that whatever diminishes noise lessens friction. If the new tramways, of which we are about to have an instalment, effect something in this way, we shall hail them as steps towards a return to peace.

The Graphic.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. CREDITON'S bank was in the High Street of Capelford — a low-roofed, rather shabby-looking office, with dingy old desks and counters, at which the clerks sat about in corners, all visible to the public, and liable to constant distraction. The windows were never cleaned, on principle, and there were some iron bars across the lower half of them. Mr. Crediton's own room was inside — you had to pass through the office to reach it; and the banker, when he chose to open his door, was visible to the clerks and the public at the end of the dingy vista, just as the clerks, and the public entering at the swing-door, and sometimes the street outside, were to him. The office was a kind of lean-to to the house, which was much loftier, more imposing, and stately; and Mr. Crediton's room communicated with his dwelling by a dark passage. The whole edifice was red brick, and recalled the age of the early Georges, or even of their predecessor Anne — a time when men were not ashamed of their business, but at the same time did it unpretendingly, and had no need during office hours of gilding or plate-glass. The house had a flight of steps up to it almost as high as the top of the office windows, and a big iron horn to extinguish links, and other traces of a moderate antiquity. Up to these steps Kate Crediton's horse would be led day after day, or her carriage draw up, in very sight of the clerks behind their murky windows. They kept their noses over their desks all day, in order that a butterfly creature, in all the brilliant colours of her kind, should flutter out and in in the sunshine, and take her pleasure. That was perhaps what some of them thought. But, to tell the truth, I don't believe many of them thought so. Even Mr. Whichelo, the head clerk, whose children were often ailing, and who had a good deal of trouble to make both ends meet, smiled benign upon Kate. Had she been her own mother, it might have been different; but she was a creature of nineteen, and everybody felt that it was natural. The clerks, with their noses at the grindstone, and her father sombre in the dingy room, working hard too in his way — all to keep up the high-stepping horses, the shining harness, the silks and velvets, and the high supremacy of that thing like a rosebud who sat princess among them, — after all, was it not quite natural? What is the good of the stem but to carry, and of the leaves and thorns but to protect, the flower?

But it may be supposed that John Mitford's feelings would be of a very strange description when he found himself dropped

down in Mr. Crediton's office, as if he had dropped from the skies. He was the junior clerk, and did not know the business, and his perch was behind backs, not far from one of the windows from which he could see all Kate's exits and entrances. He saw the public, too, coming and going, the swing-door flashing back and forward all day long, and on Saturdays and market-days caught sometimes the wondering glances of country folks who knew him. He sat like a man in a dream, while all these things went on around him. How his life had changed! What had brought him here? what was to come of it? were questions which glided dreamily through John's brain from time to time, but he could give no answer to them. He was here instead of at Fanshawe Regis; instead of serving the world and his generation, as he had expected to do, he was junior clerk in a banker's office, entering dreary lines of figures into dreary columns. How had it all come about? John was stupefied by the fall and by the surprise, and all the overwhelming dreary novelty; and accordingly he sat the day through at first, and did what he was told to do with a certain apathy beyond power of thinking; but that was a state of mind, of course, which could not last for ever. Yet even when that apathy was broken, the feeling of surprise continued to surmount all other feelings. He had taken this strange step, as he supposed, by his own will; nobody had forced or even persuaded him. It was his own voluntary doing; and yet how was it? This question floated constantly, without any power on his part to answer it, about his uneasy brain.

He was close to Kate, sitting writing all day long under a roof adjoining the very roof that sheltered her, with herself before his eyes every day. For he could not help but see her as she went out and in. But still it was doubtful whether there was much comfort in those glimpses of her. Mr. Crediton had not been unkind to him; but he had never pretended, of course, to be deeply delighted with the unexpected choice which his daughter had made. "If I consent to Kate's engagement with you," he had said, "it must be upon my own conditions. It is likely to be a long time before you can marry, and I cannot have a perpetual phylandering going on before my eyes. She might like it, perhaps, for that is just one of the points upon which girls have no feeling; but you may depend upon it, it would be very bad for you, and I should not submit to it for a moment. I don't mean to say that you are not to see her, but it must be only at stipulated times. Thus far, at

least, I must have my own way." John had acquiesced in this arrangement without much resistance. It had seemed to him reasonable, comprehensible. Perpetual philandering certainly would not do. He had to work—to acquire a new trade foreign to all his previous thoughts and education—to put himself in the way of making money and providing for his wife; and he too could see as well as her father that to be following her about everywhere, and interrupting the common business of life by idle love-making, however beatific it might be, was simply impossible. To be able to look forward now and then to the delight of her presence—to make milestones upon his way of the times in which he should be permitted to see her, and sun himself in her eyes,—with that solace by the way, John thought the time would pass as the time passed to Jacob—as one day; and he accordingly assented, almost without reluctance.

But he did not know when he consented thus to the father's conditions that Kate would be flashing before him constantly under an aspect so different from that in which he had known her. Her engagement, though it made such an overwhelming difference to him, made little difference to Kate. She had come home to resume her usual life—a life not like anything that was familiar to him. Poor John had never known much about young ladies. He had never become practically aware of the place which amusement holds in such conditions of existence—how, in fact, it becomes the framework of life round which graver matters gather and entwine themselves; and it was a long time before he fully made the discovery, if, indeed, he did ever make it. Society could scarcely be said to exist in Fanshawe Regis; and those perpetual ridings and drivings and expeditions here and there—those dinners and dances—those afternoon assemblages—the music and the chatter, the *va et vient*, the continual flutter and movement, confounded the young man. He tried to be glad at first that she had so much gaiety, and felt very sorry for himself, who was shut out from all share in it. And then he got a little puzzled and perplexed. Did this sort of thing go on forever? Was there never to be any break in it? Kate herself unconsciously unfolded to him its perennial character without the remotest idea of the amazement she was exciting in his mind. So far as John's experience went, a dance, or even a dinner-party, or a croquet-party, or a picnic, were periodical delights which came at long intervals, but they were the common occupations of life

to Kate. He felt that he could have lived and worked like Jacob for twice seven years, had his love been living such a life as Rachel did by his side—going out with the flocks, tending the lambs, drawing water at the fountain, smiling shy and sweet at him from the tent-door. These were the terms in which his imagination put it. Had he seen Kate trip by the window as his mother did with her little basket, or trip back again with a book, after his own ideal of existence, his heart would have blessed her as she passed, and he himself would have returned to his ledger and worked twice as hard, and learned his duties twice as quickly; but to see her flash away from the door amid a cavalcade of unknown riders—to see her put into her carriage by some man whom he longed to kick on the spot—to watch her out of sight going into scenes where his imagination could not follow her, was very hard upon John. And thus to see her every day, and yet never, except once a-week or so, exchange words with her! Against his will, and in spite of all his exertions, this sense of her continual presence, and of her unknown friends, and life which was so close to him, and yet so far from him, absorbed his mind. When he should have been working his office work he was thinking where could she have gone to-day? When he ought to have been awakening to the interests of the bank, he was brooding with a certain sulkiness quite unnatural to him over the question, who that man could be who put her on her horse? It is impossible to describe how all this hindered and hampered him, and what a chaos it made of his life.

And even Kate herself found it very different from what she had anticipated. She sent in a servant for him several times at first; and once, when she had some little errand in the town, had the audacity to walk into the bank in her proper person and call her lover from his desk. "Please tell Mr. Mitford I want him," she said, looking Mr. Whichelo full in the face, with an angelical blush and smile; and when he came to her, Kate turned to him before all the clerks, who were watching with a curiosity which may be imagined. "Oh John," she said, "come with me as far as Paterson's. It is market-day, and I don't like to walk alone." Of course he went, though he had his work to do. Of course he would have gone whatever had been the penalty. The penalty was that Mr. Crediton gave Kate what she called "a dreadful scold." "It was like a fishwoman, you know," she confided to John afterwards. "I could not have believed it of papa; but I suppose when people are in

a passion they are all alike, and don't mind what they say."

"It's because he grudges you to me," said poor John, with a sigh, "and I don't much wonder;" upon which Kate clasped her two pretty hands on his arm, and beguiled him out of his troubles. This was one of the Sunday evenings which it was his privilege to spend with her. Mr. Crediton was old-fashioned, and saw no company on Sundays, and that was the day on which John was free to come to spend as much of it as he pleased with his betrothed. At first he had begun by going to luncheon, and remaining the whole afternoon in her company; but very soon it came to be the evening only which was given up to him. Either it was that Mr. Crediton made himself disagreeable at luncheon, or that he thrust engagements upon Kate, reminding her that she had promised to read to him, or copy letters for him, or some altogether unimportant matter. Mr. Crediton, though he was so much the best off of the party that he had thus the means of avenging himself, was not without grievances too; indeed, had he been consulted, he would probably have declared himself the person most aggrieved. His only child was about to be taken from him, and her society was already claimed by this nameless young man, without any particular recommendation, whom in her caprice she preferred. The Sunday afternoons had been the banker's favourite moment; he had nothing to do, and his doors were shut against society, and his child was always with him. No wonder that he used all the means in his power to drive back the enemy from that sacred spot.

And Mr. Crediton had means in his power,—unlike Mrs. Mitford, who sat, more alone than he, by her bedroom window all the hours when she was not at church, and wiped noiselessly again and again the tears out of her eyes. John's mother suffered more from this dreary change than words could say. She had not the heart to sit down-stairs except when it was necessary for that outline of family life consisting of prayers and meals, which, to Dr. Mitford's mind, filled up all possible requirements. Mrs. Mitford did not tell her husband nor any one what she was thinking. There seemed no longer any one left in the world who cared to know. And she could not punish Kate as Mr. Crediton could punish John. Probably she would not have done it if she could, for to punish Kate would have been to punish him too; but oh, she sometimes thought to herself, if her horse had only run away with her before somebody else's door, this might never have been!

Thus it will be seen that this pretty young lady and that first caprice for the subjugation of John which came into her mind before she had seen him, in the leisure of her convalescence, had affected the friends of both in anything but a happy way. Indeed nobody except perhaps Kate herself got any good out of the new bond. To her, who at the present moment was not called upon to make any sacrifice or give up anything, the possession of John, as of some one to fall back upon, was pleasant enough. She had all her usual delights and pleasures, lived as she had always lived, amused herself as of old, was the envy of her companions, the ringleader in all their amusements, the banker's only, much-indulged, fortunate child; and at the same time she had John to worship her on those Sunday evenings which once had rather been dull for Kate. When Mr. Crediton dozed, as he sometimes did after dinner, or when he was busy with the little private pieces of business he used to give himself up to on Sunday evenings, there was her lover ready to bow down before her. It was the cream and crown of all her many enjoyments. Everybody admired, petted, praised, and was good to Kate, and John adored her. She looked forward to her Sunday ramble round the old-fashioned garden, sometimes in the dark, sometimes in the moonlight, with an exquisite sense of something awaiting her there which had a more subtle, penetrating, delicious sweetness than all the other sweets surrounding her. And she felt that he was happy too as soon as she had placed her little hand on his arm—and forgot that there was anything in his lot which could make him feel that he had bought his happiness dearly. Kate was young, and knew nothing about life, and therefore was unconsciously selfish. She was happy, without any drawback to her happiness; and so, naturally and as a matter of course, she took him to be, forgetting that he had purchased that hour on the Sunday evenings by the sacrifice of all the prejudices and all the habits and prospects and occupations of his life. This unconsciousness was one from which she might awaken any day. A chance word might open her eyes to it, and show her, to her own disgust and confusion, the immense price he was paying for so transitory a delight; but at present nothing had awakened such a thought in her mind, and she was the one happy among the five most intimately concerned. Next after Kate in contentment with the new state of affairs was Dr. Mitford, who saw a prospect of a very satisfactory "settlement in life" for his

son though he did not feel any very great satisfaction in the preliminaries. It was a pain to him, though a mild one, that John had abandoned the Church and become a clerk in a banker's office. It was a pain, and a little humiliation too, for everybody in Fanshawe Regis, and even the neighbouring clergymen, shook their heads and were very sorry to hear it, and wounded Dr. Mitford's pride. But, after all, that was a trifling drawback in comparison with the substantial advantage of marrying so much money as was represented by Kate Crediton. "And fond of her too," he would say to himself in his study when he paused in one of his articles and thought it over. But yet the articles were interrupted by thinking it over as they had never been used to be. It gave him a passing twinge now and then, but it was he who suffered the least after Kate.

As for Mr. Crediton, there was a certain sullen wrath in his mind which he seldom suffered to have expression, yet which plagued him like a hidden wound. To think that for this lout, this country lad, his child should, as it were, have jilted him, made light of all his wishes, shown a desire to separate herself from him and the life which he had fenced round from every care, and made delightful with every indulgence that heart could desire. He had gone out of his way to contrive pleasures for her, and to surround her with everything that was brilliant and fair like herself. She was more like a princess than a banker's daughter, thanks to his unchanging, unremitting thoughtfulness; and this was how she had rewarded him the very first opportunity she had. Mr. Crediton was very sore and wroth, as fathers are sometimes. Mothers are miserable and lonely and jealous often enough, heaven knows! but the fathers are wroth with that inextinguishable wonder — how the love-making of some trumpery young man should, in a day or two or a week or two, obliterate their deeper love and all the bonds of nature — which lies as deep in the heart as does the young impulse which calls it forth. Mr. Crediton was angry, not so much, except at moments, with Kate, as with the world, and nature, and things in general — and John. He could not cross or thwart his child, but he would have been glad in his heart if something had happened to the man whom his child loved. Such sentiments are wicked, and they are very inconsistent — but they exist everywhere, and it would be futile to deny them; and the consequence was, that Mr. Crediton was much less happy after his daughter's engagement, and put up with it

by an effort; and, while John had his moment of delight on those Sunday evenings, was, for his part, anything but delighted. It even made him less good a man. He sat and fretted by himself, and found it very difficult to occupy his mind with any other subject. It vexed him to think of his Kate thus hanging on a stranger's arm. Of course he had always known that she must marry some time, but he had thought little of it as an approaching calamity; and then it had appeared certain that there would be a blaze of external advantage, and perhaps splendour, in any match Kate could make, which perhaps, prospectively at least, would lessen the blow. If it had exalted her into the higher circles of the social paradise, he felt as if the deprivation to himself would have been less great. But here there was nothing to make amends — no salve to his wounded tenderness. Poor John! Mr. Crediton had the justice now and then to feel that John was paying a hard price for his felicity. "Serve the fellow right," he said, and almost hated him; and pondered, with a *sour* sense of cruelty and wrongdoing, how he might be got rid of and removed out of the way.

As for Mrs. Mitford she was simply unhappy, without hoping to mend matters, or thinking any more than she could help about the cause. She had lost her boy. To be sure it was what most mothers have to look forward to; but she, up to the very last, had been flattering herself that she should not be as most mothers. All had been so carefully devised to keep him at home, to secure to him the life which, in her soul, she believed to be the one which would suit him best. The change was so sudden and so great, that it stupefied her at first. She had to prepare him for going away, him whom all his life she had been preparing to stay in his natural home, to repeat and improve his father's life, to carry out and develop her own; she had to make up her mind to live altogether without him, she who had expected not only his society to make her happy, but his aid to make something of her work. It was she who had been for all these years the real spiritual head of Fanshawe Regis. Dr. Mitford had done the "duty," and had preached the sermons, but every practical good influence, every attempt to mend the rustic parish, to curb its characteristic vices, or develop its better qualities, had come from his wife. And she had laboured on for years past, with the conviction that her son would perfect everything she began; that he would bring greater knowledge to it, and a more perfectly trained mind, and all the superior

understanding which such humble women hold to be natural to a man. When she had to give up this hope, it seemed to her at first as though the world had come to an end. What was the use of doing anything more, of carrying on the plans which must now die with her? The next new curate would probably care nothing about her schemes, and even might set himself to thwart her, as new curates sometimes do when a clergywoman is too active in a parish. And she was sick of the world and everything in it. The monotony of her life, from which all the colour seemed to have died out in a moment, suddenly became apparent to her, and all the failures, and obstructions, and hindrances which met her at every side. What could she do, a weak woman, she said to herself, against all the powers of darkness as embodied in Fanshawe Regis? Would it not be best to resign the unprofitable warfare and sink back into quiet, and shut out the mocking light? Wherever she went the people asked her questions about Mr. John. Was he not to be a clergyman after all? Was it along o' his lass that wouldn't let him do as he wished? What was it? Mrs. Mitford came home with her heart wearied by such inquiries, and sick with disappointment and misery. And she would go up to the room in which he was born, and cry, and say to herself that she never never could encounter such inquiries again. And oh, how dreary it was sitting down-stairs for the few moments which necessity and Dr. Mitford required, in those summer nights when the moths were flying by scores in at the open window, and dimness reigned in all the corners, and the lamp shone steady and clear on the table! In all the obscurity round her, her son was not lurking. He was not ready to step in by the open window as he had done so often. He was with Kate Crediton, giving up his whole heart and soul to her; and his father and mother rang for the servants, and had prayers, as though they had never had any children. What a change, what a change it was! Mrs. Mitford knew that it was impossible to thwart providence, let its plans be ever so unsatisfactory; but oh, she said to herself, why did not Kate's accident happen close to the Huntleys, or to any house but hers? Other boys were not so romantic, not so tender-hearted; and other mothers had heaps of children, and could not brood over the fortunes of every individual among them, as Mrs. Mitford, with an ache of helpless anger at herself, knew that she brooded over John's. But all was in vain. She could not mend matters now. She could

not mend her own bleeding, aching heart. And after all it was best to go back to her work, whatever might come of it, and do her best. She could bear anything, she thought, but those Sunday nights — moments which had once been so sweet, and were now so solitary. She said not a word to any one, and tried hard to keep herself from thinking; and she wrote kind, cheerful letters to her boy, who, for his part, was so very good in writing regularly — so unlike most young men, as she told the people. But after she had finished those cheery, pleasant, gossiping letters, with all the news of the parish in them, Mrs. Mitford would sit down and have a good cry. Oh what a change there was! how silent the house was, how ghostly the garden where she was always thinking she heard his step! The servants came in and went out again, and the father and the mother would sit together softly without a word, as if they had no child. Thus it will be seen that, of all concerned, it was Mrs. Mitford who suffered most; but that none were satisfied, or felt the slightest approach of anything like happiness in the new state of affairs, unless, indeed, it might be Kate.

CHAPTER XV.

THERE is nothing so hard in human experience as to fit in the exceptional moments of life into their place, and bring them into a certain harmony with that which surrounds them; and in youth it is very hard to understand how it is that the exceptional can come only in moments. When the superlative either of misery or happiness arrives, there is nothing so difficult to an imaginative mind as to descend from that altitude and allow that the commonplace must return, and the ordinary resume its sway. And perhaps, more than any other crisis, the crisis of youthful passion and romance is the one which it is most difficult to come down from. It has wound up the young soul to an exaltation which has scarcely any parallel in life; even to the least visionary, the event which has happened — the union which has taken place between one heart and another — the sentiment which has concentrated all beauty and loveliness and desirableness in one being, and made that being his — is something too supreme and dazzling to fall suddenly into the light of common day. John Mitford was not matter of fact, and the situation to him was doubly exciting. It was attended, besides, by the disruption of his entire life; and though he would readily have acknowledged that the rest of his existence could not be passed in those exquisite pangs and

delights — that mixture of absolute rapture in being with her, and visionary despair at her absence — which had made up the story of his brief courtship; yet there was in him a strong unexpressed sense that the theory of life altogether must henceforward be framed on a higher level — that a finer ideal was before him, higher harmonies, a more perfect state of being; instead of all which dreams, when he came to himself he was seated on a high stool, before a desk, under the dusty window of Mr. Crediton's bank, with the sound of the swinging door, and the voices of the public, and the crackle of notes, and the jingle of coin in his ears, and a tedious trade to learn, in which there seemed to him no possible satisfaction of any kind. He had said that a clergyman's was the only work worth doing, with the sense that it was the only work for mankind in which a man could have any confidence. He had said so, while in the same breath he had expressed his want of absolute belief; and the one sentiment had not affected the other. But here he found himself in a sphere where it did not matter to any one what he believed — where he was utterly out of the way of influencing other people's thoughts — and had none of that work within reach which seems almost indispensable to men of his training — work which should affect his fellow-men. So long as he knew what two and two make, that seemed to be all the knowledge that was required of him. With a sense of surprise which almost stupefied him, he found that all the careful education of his life was as nought to him in his new sphere. If it did not harm him — which sometimes he thought it did — at least it was totally useless. The multiplication table was of more use than Homer or Virgil; and John's mind was the mind of a scholar, not of an active thinker, much less doer. He was the kind of man that dwells and lingers upon the cadence of a line or the turn of a sentence — a man not always very sure which were the most real — the men and women in his books, or those he pushed against in the public ways. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of." Fancy a man with such words in his mouth finding himself all at once a dream among dreams, gazing vaguely over a counter at the public, feeling himself utterly incapable of any point of encounter with that public such as his education and previous training suggested, except in the way of counting out money to them, or adding up the sums against them. What a wonderful, wonderful change it was! And then to come down to this from that exaltation of love's dream — to jump

into this, shivering as into an ice-cold bath, out of all the excitement of youthful plans and fancies, visions of the nobler existence, ecstasy of first betrothal! The shock was so immense that it took away his breath. He sat all silent, chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy for days together, and then got his hat and walked back to the shabby little rooms he had taken on the outskirts of Crediton, stupefied, and not knowing what he was about. What was he to do when he got there? He ate his badly-cooked and painfully-homely meal, and then he would sit and stare at his two candles as he stared at the public in the bank. He did not feel capable of reading — what was the good of reading? Nothing that he had within his reach could be of any use to him in his new career, and his mind was not in a fit condition for resuming any studies or seeking out any occupation for itself. When Kate made inquiries into his life on the Sunday evenings, he found it very difficult to answer her. What could he say? There was nothing in it which was worth describing, or which it would have given her, he thought, anything but pain to know.

"But tell me, have you nice rooms — is there a nice woman to look after you?" Kate would say. "If you don't answer me I shall have to go and see them some day when you are at the bank. I will say you are my — cousin, or something. Or perhaps if I were to tell the truth," she added, softly, with her favourite trick, almost leaning her head against his arm, "it would interest her, and she would take more pains."

"And what would you say if you said the truth?" said foolish John. Poor fellow! this was all he had for his sacrifice, and naturally he longed for his hire, such as it was.

"I should say, of course, that you were a nearer one still, and a dearer one," said Kate, with a soft little laugh; "what else? but oh, John, is it not very different? That dear Fanshawe Regis, and your mother, and everything you have been used to. Is it not very, very different?" she cried, expecting that he would tell her how much more blessed were his poor lodgings and close work when brightened by the hope of her.

"Yes, it is very different," he said, in a dreamy, dreary tone. The summer was stealing on; it was August by this time, and the days were shortening. And it was almost dark, as dark as a summer night can be, when they strayed about the garden in the High Street, which was so different from the Rectory garden. There were few flow-

ers, but at the farther end some great lime-trees, old and vast, which made the gravel-path look like a woodland road for twenty paces or so. 'She could not see his face in the dark, but there was in his voice something of that inflection which promised a flattering end to the sentence. Kate was a little chilled, she did not know why.

"But you don't—grudge it?" she said, softly. "Oh, John, there is something in your voice—you are not sorry you have done so much?—for nothing but *me*?"

"Sorry!" he said, stooping over her—"sorry to be called into life when I did not know I was living! But, Kate, if it were not for *this*, that is my reward for everything, I will not deny that there is a great difference. I should have been working upon men the other way; and one gets contemptuous of money. Never mind, I care for nothing while I have you."

"I never knew any one that was contemptuous of money," said Kate, gravely; "people here say money can do everything. That is why I want you to be rich."

"Dear," he said, holding her close to him, "you don't understand, and neither did I. I don't think I shall ever be rich. How should I, a clerk in a bank? Your father does not show me any favour, and it is not to be expected he should. Who am I, that I should try to steal his child from him? Since I have been here, Kate, there are a great many things that I begin to understand—"

"What?" she said, as he paused; raising in the soft summer dark her face to his.

"Well, for one thing, what a gulf there is between you and me!" he said; "and how natural it was that your father should be vexed. And then, Kate—don't let it grieve you, darling—how very very unlikely it is that I shall ever be the rich man you want me to be. I thought when we spoke of it once that anything you told me to do would be easy; and so it would, if it was definite—anything to bear—if it was labouring night and day, suffering tortures for you—"

Here Kate interrupted him with a little sob of excitement, holding his arm clasped in both her hands: "Oh, John, do I want you to suffer?" she cried. "You should have everything that was best in the world if it was me—"

"But I don't know how to grow rich—I don't think I shall ever know," said John, with a sigh. Up to this moment he had restrained himself and had given no vent to his feelings, but when the ice was once broken they all burst forth. The two went

on together up and down under the big lime-trees, she gazing up at him, he bending down to her, as they had done in the old garden at Fanshawe when he confided his difficulties to her. He had thrust off violently that series of difficulties, abandoning the conflict, but only to let a new set of difficulties seize upon him in still greater strength than the former. And the whole was complicated by a sense that it was somehow her doing, and that a complaint of them was next to a reproach of her. But still it was not in nature, his mouth being thus opened, that John could refrain.

"I seem to be always complaining," he said—"one time of circumstances, another time of myself; for it is of myself this time. Many a fellow would be overjoyed, no doubt, to find himself in the way of making his own fortune, but you can't think how little good I am. I suppose I never was very bright. If you will believe me, Kate, not only shall I never make any fortune where your father has placed me, but I am so stupid that I cannot see how a man may rise out of such a position, nor how a fortune is to be made."

"But people do it," said Kate, eagerly; "one hears of them every day. Of course I don't know how. It is energy or something—making up their minds to it; and of course though papa may look cross he must be favourable to you. John, you *know* he must. If I thought he was not, I should make him—I don't know what I should not make him do—"

"You must not make him do anything," said John. "You may be sure I don't mean to give in—I shall try my best, and perhaps there may be more in me than I think. I suppose it is seeing you, and being so far apart from you, that is the worst. Except to-night—if the Sundays came, say three times in a week—"

"I don't think I should like that," said Kate; "but seriously, you know, don't you like to see me—are you—jealous?" she asked, with a little laugh. The talk had been too grave for her, and she was glad to draw it down to a lower sphere.

"If I were," he said, with a sudden glow of passion, "I should go away. I have never faced that idea yet; but if I were—jealous, as you say—"

"What?" she cried, with the curiosity of her kind, clinging to him in the fondest proximity, yet half pleased to play with her keen little dagger in his heart.

"That would be the end," he said, with a long-drawn breath. And a thrill of excitement came over Kate which was more pleasurable than otherwise. Had she really

stirred him up to the height of a *grande passion*? It was not that she meant to be cruel to John. But such an opportunity does not come in everybody's way. She could not help wondering suddenly how he would feel under the trial, and how his sufferings would show themselves. As for his going away, she did not put much faith in that. He would be very unhappy, and there would be a certain satisfaction in the sight of his torments. Kate did not say this in words, nor was she conscious of meaning it; but in the mere levity of her power the thought flashed through her mind. For, to be sure, it would only be for a moment that she would let him suffer. When she had enjoyed that evidence of her own supremacy, then she would overwhelm him with kindness, to prove to him how foolish he was ever to doubt her, give herself to him without waiting for anybody's leave. But in the mean time that strange curiosity to see how far her power went which is at the bottom of so much cruelty ran through her mind. It all went and came in the twinkling of an eye, passing like the lightning, and when she answered him, poor John had no idea what a sudden gleam of suggestion had come over her, or how far her imagination had gone in the time.

"But there is not going to be an end," she said, in her soft coaxing voice. "And you will put up with it, and with papa, and with a great many things we don't like—won't you? for the sake of a poor little girl who is not worth it. Oh, John! you know you committed yourself to all that when you saved my life."

John was nothing loath to commit himself now to anything she asked of him; and as they strayed on under the dark rustling lime-trees, with nobody within sight or sound, and the darkness enclosing them, utter content came over the young man's mind. After all, was not this hour cheaply purchased by all the tedium and all the disgusts of common life? And even the common life looked more endurable in this sweet gloom which was full of Kate's soft breathing, and the soft rustle of her dress, and sense of her presence. She was so close to him, leaning on his arm, and yet he could see nothing but an outline of her by his side. It was thus she had been by him on the night which decided his fate—a shadow-woman, tender, clinging, almost invisible. "Kate, Kate," he said, out of his full heart, "I wonder if you are a little witch leading me astray, for it is always in the dark when I can't see you that you are good to me. When we go in you will be

kind and sweet, but you will be Miss Crediton. Are we shadows, you and I? or are you Undine or Lorelei drawing me to my fate?"

"You foolish fellow," said Kate; "how could I be Undine and not a drop of water nearer than Fanshawe Regis? Don't you see that when we go in papa is there? You would not like me to write up in big letters—'I have gone over to the enemy—I don't belong to you any longer.' You know, John, it would be true. I am not *his* now, poor papa, and he is so fond of me; but you would not like me to put that on a flag and have it carried before me; you would not be so cruel to papa?"

"I am a poor mortal," said John, "I almost think I could be cruel. If you are not *his*, are you mine? Say so, you little Queen of Shadows, and I will try to remember it and comfort my heart."

"Whose else should I be?" whispered Kate. And the lover's satisfaction attained for a moment to that point of perfection which lasts but for a moment. His heart seemed to stop beating in that ineffable fullness of content. He took her into his arms in the soft summer darkness—two shadows in a world of shadow. Everything around them, everything before them, was dim with mist. Nothing could be more uncertain than their prospects, a fact which John, at least, had begun to realize fully. The whole scene was an illustration of the words which were so often in his heart. Uncertain gusts of balmy wind, now from one quarter, now from another, agitated the trees overhead. The faint twilight of the skies confused all outlines—the darkness under the trees obliterated every living thing—little mysterious thrills of movement, of the leaves, of the air, of invisible insects or roosted birds, were about them. We are such stuff as dreams are made of. But amid these shadows for one moment supreme satisfaction and delight filled the mind of John at least.

Mr. Crediton was in the drawing-room all alone when they went in. Had he been prudent he would have gone to his library, as he usually did, and spared himself the sight; but this night a jealous curiosity had possessed him. To see his child, who had been his for all these years, come in with dazzled dazzling eyes, and that soft blush on her cheek, and her arm, even as they entered the room, lingering within that of her lover, was very hard upon him. Confound him! he said in his heart, although he knew well that but for John he would have had no child. He noted the change which came over Kate—that change which chilled her

lover, and went through him like a blast from the snow-hills — without any pleasure, almost without additional irritation. She is not even frank, as she used to be, he said to himself. She puts on a face to cheat me, and to make me believe I am something to her still; and it might almost be said that Mr. Crediton hated the young fellow who had come between him and his child.

"It is such a lovely evening, papa," said Kate, "we could scarcely make up our minds to come in. It is not the country, of course; but still I am fond of our garden. Even at Fanshawe I don't think there are nicer trees."

"Of course the perfection of everything is at Fanshawe," he said, with a sudden sharpness which changed the very atmosphere of the room all in a moment; "but I think it is imprudent to stay out so late, and it is damp, and there is no moon. I thought you required a moon for such rambles. Please let me have a cup of tea."

"We did very well without a moon," said Kate, trying to keep up her usual tone; but it was not easy, and she went off with a subdued step to the tea-table, and had not even the courage to call John to her, as she generally did. Oh, why didn't papa stay in his own room? she said to herself. It is only one night in the week, and he should not be so selfish. But she took him his tea with her own hand and tried all she could to soothe him, "You have got a headache, papa," she said, tenderly, putting down the cup on the table by him, and looking so anxious, so ingenuous, and innocent, that it was hard to resist her.

"I have no headache," he said; "but I am busy. Don't take any notice, occupy yourselves as you please, without any thought of me."

This speech was produced by a sudden compunction and sense of injustice. It was a sacrifice to right, and yet he was all wrong and set on edge. He thought that Kate should have perceived that this amiability was forced and fictitious; but either she was insensible to it, or she did not any longer care to go deeper than mere words. She kissed his forehead as if he had been in the kindest mood, and said, "Poor papa! — thanks. It is so kind of you to think of us when you are suffering." To think of them! when she must have known he was wishing the fellow away. And then Kate retired to the tea-table, which was behind Mr. Crediton, and out of sight, and he saw her beckon to John with a half-imperceptible movement. The young man obeyed, and went and sat beside her, and the sound

of their voices in low-toned conversation, with little bursts of laughter and soft exclamations, was gall and wormwood to the father. It was all "that fellow," he thought; his Kate herself would never have used him so; and it was all his self-control could do to prevent him addressing some bitter words to John. But the fact was, it was Kate's doing alone — Kate, who was less happy to-night than usual, but whom his tone had galled into opposition. "No," she was whispering to John, "you are not to go away — unless you want to be rid of me. Papa ought to be brought to his senses — he has no right to be so cross; and I am not going to give in to him." This was the nature of the conversation which was going on behind Mr. Crediton's back. He did not hear it, and yet it gave him a furious sense of resentment which expressed itself at last in various little assaults.

"Have the goodness not to whisper, Kate," he said. "You know it sets my nerves on edge. Speak out," an address which had the effect of ending all conversation between the lovers for a minute or two. They sat silent and looked at each other till Mr. Crediton spoke again. "I seem unfortunately to act upon you like a wet blanket," he said, with an acrid tone in his voice. "Perhaps you would rather I went away."

At this Kate's spirit was roused. "Papa, I don't know what I have done to displease you," she said, coming forward. "If I am only to see him once in the week, surely I may talk to him when he comes."

"I am not aware that I have objected to your talk," said Mr. Crediton, restraining his passion.

"Not in words," said Kate, now fairly up in arms; "but it is not just, papa. It makes John unhappy and it makes me unhappy. He has a right to have me to himself when he comes. You cannot forget that we are engaged. I never said a word when you insisted on once a-week, though it was a disappointment; but you know he ought not to be cheated now."

All this time John had been moving about at the further end of the room, at once angry to the verge of violence, and discouraged to the lowest pitch. He had cleared his throat and tried to speak a dozen times already. Now he came forward, painfully restraining himself. "I ought to speak," he said; "but I dare not trust myself to say anything. Mr. Crediton cannot expect me to give up willingly the only consolation I have."

"It is time enough to speak of giving up when any one demands a sacrifice," said Mr. Crediton, taking upon him suddenly

that superiority of perfect calm with which a middle-aged man finds it so often possible to confute an impatient boy. "I am sorry that my innocent remarks should have irritated you both. You must school me, Kate," he added, with a forced smile, "what I am to do and say."

And then he went to his room, with a sense that he had won the victory. And certainly, if a victory is won every time the other side is discomfited, such was the case at this moment. John did not say anything — did not even come to be comforted, but kept walking up and down at the other end of the room. It was Kate who had to go to him, to steal her hand within his arm to coax him back to his usual composure. And it was a process not very easy to be performed. She moved him quickly enough to tender demonstrations over herself, which indeed she had no objection to, but John was chilled and discouraged and cast down to the very depths.

"He was only cross," said Kate; "when he is cross I never pay any attention. Something has gone wrong in business, or that sort of thing. John, dear, say you don't mind. It is not me that am making myself disagreeable; it is only papa."

But it was hard to get John to respond. Notwithstanding that Mr. Crediton had retired and left the field open, and that Kate did all in her power to detain him, the young man left her earlier than usual, and with a sufficiently heavy heart. Kate's father was seeking a quarrel — endeavouring to show him the falseness of his position, and make it plain how obnoxious he was. John walked all the long way home to his little lodgings, which were at the other end of the town, contemplating the dim Sunday streets, all so dark, with glances of lamp-light and dim reflections from the wet pavement — for in the mean time rain had fallen. And this was all he had for all he had sacrificed. He did not reckon Kate herself in the self-discussion. She was worth everything a man could do; but to be thus chained and bound, within sight, yet shut out from her — to be made the butt of another man's jealous resentment — to have a seeming privilege, which was made into a kind of torture — and to have given his life for this, — what could he say even to himself? He sat down in his hard arm-chair and gazed into the flame of his two candles, and felt himself unable to do anything but brood over what had happened. He could not read nor turn his mind from the covert insult, the unwilling consent. And what was to come of it? John covered his face with his hands when he came to that part of the

subject. There was nothing to look forward to — nothing but darkness. It was natural that she, a spoiled child of fortune, should smile and trust in something turning up; but as for John, he saw nothing that could turn up; and in all the world there seemed to him no single creature with less hope of moulding his future according to his wishes than himself.

CHAPTER XVI.

THIS moment of dismay, however, passed over, as the moments of delight did, without bringing about any absolute revolution in John's life. The next day Mr. Crediton took occasion to be more than ordinarily civil, repenting of his bad humour, and Kate stopped short before his window as she rode by to wave her hand to him. A man cannot build the comfort of his life permanently on such trifles; but there is a moment when the wave of a girl's hand as she passes is enough to strengthen and exhilarate his heart. So the crisis blew over as the others had done, and the routine went on. John set his teeth, and confronted his position with all its difficulties, making a desperate effort. A woman might bear such a trial, and live through it; but it is hard upon a man, when he is no longer a boy, to be called upon to give up everything, to change the entire current of his occupations, and make an unquestionable descent in the social scale, for love, without even giving him its natural compensations. An imprudent marriage is a different thing, for there the consequences are inevitable when once the step has been taken, and have to be borne, will he nill he. But to make love his all — the sole object and meaning of his life — there was in this a certain humiliation which by turns overwhelmed John's fortitude and courage. To give up happiness for higher aims is surely more worthy, more noble, more fit, than to give up everything else for the hope of happiness. He who had made himself wretched over the stumbling-blocks of absolute belief required from him by the Church, was not likely to find much comfort in the thought that he was abandoning every chance of a useful life for the sake of a soft word, a rare caress, or even, to take it at its best, for the chance of eventual selfish personal happiness. But he restrained himself as best he could, and settled down doggedly to his work, trying not to think of it, not to look forward to the moments which were supposed to be his recompense, and were at the same time his punishment. It was indeed a relief to him, and helped him to bear his burden more steadily when the annual removal of the family to Fern-

wood took place, and Kate vanished from before his eyes. She cried when she parted with him that last Sunday, and John felt a *serrement du cœur* which almost choked him; but still, at the same time, when it was over and she was gone, life on the whole became easier. He made an effort to interest himself in his brother clerks, and enter into their life; but what was a humiliation to John was to them such a badge of superiority that he could make but little of that. He was Mr. Crediton's future son-in-law, probably their own future employer, in the eyes of the young men around him, who accepted his advances with a deference and half-concealed pride which threw John back again upon himself. He had no equals, no companions. To be sure there were plenty of people in Camelford who would have been glad to receive Dr. Mitford's son, but he had no desire for the ordinary kind of society. And it is not to be described with what pleasure he saw Fred Huntley, a man whom he had never cared for heretofore, push open the swinging door of the bank, and peer round the place with short-sighted eyes. "Mr. Mitford, if you please," Fred said, perhaps rather superciliously, to the clerk who was John's superior, expecting, it was clear, to be ushered into some secret retirement where the principals of the bank might be. When John rose from his desk, Huntley gazed at him with unfeigned astonishment. "What! you here!" he said; and opened his eyes still wider when John turned round and explained to Mr. Whicelo that he was going out, and why. "You don't mean to say they stick you at a desk like that, among all those fellows?" Fred said, as they left the bank together; which exclamation of wonder revived the original impatience which use and wont by this time had calmed down.

"Exactly like the other fellows," said John; "and quite right too, or why should I be here?"

"Then I suppose you are — learning — the business," said Fred. "Old Crediton must mean you to be his successor. And that is great luck, though I confess it would not have much charm for me."

"It is very well," said John, "I have nothing to complain of. If I can stick to it I suppose I shall earn some money sooner or later, which is a great matter, all you people say."

"Of course it is a great matter," said Fred. "You told that old fellow you were going out in a wonderful explanatory way, as if you thought he mightn't like it. Can't you stay and have something with me at the hotel? I have to be here all night, much

against my will, and I should spend it all alone unless you'll stay."

"Thanks; it does me good to see a known face. I'll stay if you'll have me," said John; and then, as it was still daylight, they took a preparatory stroll about the streets of Camelford. The inn was in the High Street, not very far from the bank and the Crediton mansion. The young men walked about in the twilight streets talking of everything in earth and heaven. It was to John as if they had met in the depths of Africa or at a lonely Indian station. He had never been very intimate with Fred Huntley, but they were of the same class, with something like the same training and associations, and the exile could have embraced the new-comer, who spoke his own language, and put the same meaning to ordinary words as he did. It was a long time before he even noticed the inquiring way in which Huntley looked at him, the half-questions he now and then would put sharply in the midst of indifferent conversation, as if to take him off his guard. John was not on his guard, and consequently the precaution was ineffectual; but after a while he observed it with a curious sensation of surprise. It was not, however, till they had dined, and were seated opposite to each other over their modest bottle of claret, that they fairly entered upon personal affairs.

"Do you find the life suit you?" said Fred, abruptly. "I beg your pardon if I am too inquisitive; but of course it must be a great change."

"I am not sure that it suits me particularly," said John; but the glance which accompanied the question had been very keen and searching, and somehow, without knowing it, a sense of suspicion ran through him; "I don't suppose any life does until one is thoroughly used to it. Routine is the grand safeguard in everything — and perhaps more than in anything else to a clerk in a bank."

"But that is absurd," said Fred. "How long do you and Mr. Crediton mean to keep up the farce? a clerk in the bank betrothed to his daughter — it is too good a joke."

"I don't see the farce," said John, "and neither, I suppose, does Mr. Crediton; he is not given to joking. Now tell me, Huntley, before we go any further, is it the dear old people at home who have asked you to come and look after me? was it — my mother? She might have known I would tell her at first hand anything there was to tell."

At this speech Fred Huntley became very much confused, though he did not look like a man to be easily put out. He grew red,

he cleared his throat, he shuffled his feet about the carpet. "Upon my word you mistake," he said; "I have not seen either Mrs. Mitford or the Doctor since you left?"

"Then who has sent you?" said John.

"My dear fellow, you have grown mighty suspicious all at once. Why should any one have sent me? may not I look up an old friend for my own pleasure? surely we have known each other sufficiently for that."

"You might," said John, "but I don't think that is the whole question, and it would be best to tell me at once what you want to know—I am quite willing to unfold my experiences," he said, with a forced smile; and then there was a pause—

"The fact of the matter is," said Fred Huntley, after an interval, with an attempt at jocularly, "that you are an intensely lucky fellow. What will you say if I tell you that I have just come from Fernwood, and that if any one sent me it was Kate Crediton, wishing for a report as to your health and spirits—though it is not so long since she has seen you, I suppose?"

"Kate Crediton?" said John, haughtily.

"I beg your pardon: my sisters are intimate with her, you know, and I hear her called so fifty times in a day—one falls into it without knowing. Hang it! since you will have it, Mitford, Miss Crediton did speak to me before I left. She heard I was coming to Camelford, and she came to me the night before—last night, in fact—and told me you were here alone, and she was uneasy about you. I wish anybody was uneasy about me. She wanted to know if you were lonely, if you were unhappy—half a hundred things. I hope you don't object to her anxiety. I assure you it conveyed a very delightful idea of your good fortune to me."

"Whatever Miss Crediton chose to say must have been like herself," cried John, trembling with sudden passion, "and no doubt she thought you were a very proper ambassador. But you must be aware, Huntley, that ladies judge very differently on these points from men. If you please we will not go further into that question."

"It was not I who began it, I am sure," said Fred; and another pause ensued, during which John sat with lowering brows, and an expression no one had ever seen on his face before. "Look here, Mitford," said Fred, suddenly, "don't go and vex yourself for nothing. If any indiscretion of mine should make dispeace between you—"

"Pray don't think for a moment that such a thing is likely to happen," said John.

"Well—well—if I am too presumptuous in supposing anything I say to be likely

to move you;" Huntley went on, with a restrained smile—"but you really must not do Miss Crediton injustice through any clumsiness of mine. It came about in the most natural way. She was afraid there had been some little sparring between her father and yourself, and was anxious, as in her position it was so natural to be—"

"Exactly," said John. "Are you on your way home now, or are you going back to Fernwood? I should ask you to take a little parcel for me if you were likely to be near Fanshawe. How are the birds? I don't suppose I shall do them much harm this year."

"Oh, they're plentiful enough," said Huntley; "my father has the house full, and I am not much of a shot, you know. They would be charmed to see you if you would go over for a day or two. I mean to make a run to Switzerland, myself. Vaughan has some wonderful expedition on hand—up the Matterhorn, or something—and I should like to be on the spot."

"Shall you go up with him?" said John.

"Not I, but I should like to be at hand to pick up what remains of him if he comes to grief—and to share his triumph, of course, if he succeeds," Fred added, with a laugh—"a friend's privilege. Are you going?—it is scarcely ten o'clock."

"You forget I am a man of business nowadays," said John, with an uncomfortable smile; and then they stood over the table, facing but not looking at each other; a suppressed resentment and excitement possessing one, which he was doing his utmost to restrain—and the other embarrassed, with a mixture of charitable vexation and malicious pleasure in the effect he had produced.

"I'll walk with you," said Huntley; for to shake hands and separate at this moment would have been something like an irredeemable breach—and that, for two men belonging to the same county, and almost the same set, was a thing to be avoided. John had not sufficient command of himself to make any effusive reply, but he did not object; and presently they were in the street walking side by side and discoursing on every subject except the one in their minds. They had not walked very far, however, before some indefinable impulse made John turn back to cast a glance at the bank—the scene of his daily penance—and the vacant house that stood beside it. They were a good way down the street, on the opposite side. He gave a slight start, which his companion perceived, but offered no explanation of it. "Let us turn back a little, I have forgotten something," he said.

Huntley, who had no particular interest where they went, turned as he was desired, and was just debating with himself whether, all the due courtesies having been attended to, he might not go into his hotel as they passed it, and leave John at peace to pursue his sullen way. But it occurred to him that John made a half-perceptible pause at the door of the "Greyhound," as if inviting him to withdraw, and this movement decided the question. "Confound the fellow! I'm not going to be dismissed when he pleases," Fred said to himself; and so went on, not knowing where he went.

"I thought so!" cried John, suddenly, in the midst of some philosophical talk, interrupting Fred in the middle of a sentence, and he rushed across the street to the bank, to his companion's utter consternation. "What is the matter?" cried Fred. John dashed at the closed door, ringing the bell violently, and beating with his stick upon the panels. Then he called loudly to a passing policeman—"Knock at the house!" he cried. "Fire! fire! Huntley, for heaven's sake, fly for the engines!—they will let me in and not you, or I should go myself—don't lose a moment. Fire! fire!"

"But stop a little," cried Huntley in dismay, plucking at John's arm; and what with the sound of the knocking and the peals of the bells which sounded sepulchral in the empty place, he scarcely could hear his own voice. "Stop a moment—you are deceiving yourself; I see no signs of fire."

"You run!" cried John, hoarsely, turning to the policeman, "or you—five pounds to the man who gets there first! Signs!—Good God! the wretches are out. We must break open the door." And he beat at it, as if he would beat it in, with a kind of frenzy; while Huntley stood stupefied and saw two or three of the bystanders, who had already begun to collect, start off with a rush to get the fire-engines. "There's nobody in the house within, sir, or else I can't make 'em hear," said the policeman, coming up to John for his orders. "Then we must break in," cried John. "There's a locksmith in the next street: you fly and fetch him, my good fellow. And where shall we get some ladders? There is a way of getting in from the house if we were once in the house."

"Not to make too bold, sir," said the policeman, "I'd like to know afore breaking into folks' houses, if you had any title to do the like. You're not Mr. Crediton, and he aint got no son."

John drew himself to his full height, and even then in his excitement glanced at Huntley, who kept by his side, irresolute

and ignorant, not knowing what to do. "I am closely connected with Mr. Crediton," he said; "nobody can have a better right to look after his affairs; and he is away from home. Get us ladders, and don't let us stand parleying here."

The policeman looked at him for a moment, and then moved leisurely across the street to seek the ladders, while in the mean time the two young men stood in front of the blind house with all its shuttered windows, and the closed doors which echoed hollow to John's assault. The dark front so jealously bolted and barred, all dangers without shut out, and the fiery traitor within ravaging at its leisure, drove John wild, excited as he was to begin with. "Good heavens! to think we must stand here," he said, ringing once more, but this time so violently that he broke the useless bell. They heard it echo shrilly through the silent place in the darkness. "Mr. White the porter's gone out for a walk—I see him," said a boy; "there aint no one there." "But I see no signs of fire," cried Fred. Just then there came silently through the night air a something which contradicted him to his face—a puff of smoke from somewhere, nobody could tell where, and all at once through the freshness of the autumn night the smell of fire suddenly breathed round them. Fred uttered one sharp exclamation, and then stood still, confounded. As for John, he gave a spring at the lower window and caught the iron bar and swung himself up. But the bar resisted his efforts, and there was nothing for it but to wait. When the ladders were at last visible, moving across the gloom, he rushed at them without taking time to think, and snatching one out of the slow hands of the indifferent bearers, placed it against the wall of the house, while Fred stood observing, and was up almost at the sill of an unshuttered window on the upper floor before Huntley could say a word. Then Fred contented himself with standing outside and looking on. "One is enough for that sort of work," he said half audibly, and fell into conversation with the policeman, who stood with an anxious countenance beside him. "I hope as the gentleman won't hurt himself," said the policeman. "I hope it's true as he's Mr. Crediton's relation, sir. Very excited he do seem, about not much, don't you think, sir? And them engines will be tearing down, running over the children before a man knows."

"Do you think there is not much danger, then?" said Fred.

"Danger!" cried the man—"Lord bless you! if it was a regular fire don't ye

think as I'd have noticed it, and me just finished my round not half an hour since? But it's hawful negligent of that fellow White. I knew as he'd been going to the bad for some time back, and I'm almost glad he's catched; but as for fire, sir —"

At this moment another puff of smoke, darker and heavier, came in a gust from the roof, and the policeman putting his eye to the keyhole, fell back again exclaiming vehemently, "By George! but it is a fire, and the gentleman's right," and sprang his rattle loudly. The crowd round gave a half-cheer of excitement, and up full speed rattled the fire-engines, clearing the way, and filling the air with clangour. At the same moment arrived a guilty sodden soul, wringing his hands, in which was a big key. "Gentlemen," he cried, "I take you to witness as I never was out before. It's an accident as nobody couldn't have foreseen. It's an accident as has never happened before." "Open the door, you ass!" cried Huntley; and then the babel of sounds, the gleams of wild light, the hiss of the falling water, all the confused whirl of circumstance that belongs to such a moment swept in, and took all distinct understanding even from the self-possessed perceptions of Fred.

As for John, when he found himself in the silent house which he had entered from the window, he had no time to think of his sensations. He had snatched the policeman's lantern from his hand ere he made his ascent, and went hastily stumbling through the unknown room, and down the long, echoing stairs, as through a wall of darkness; projecting before him the round eye of light, which made the darkness if possible more weird and mystical. His heart was very sore; it pained him physically, or at least he thought it did, lying like a lump of lead in his breast. But he was glad of the excitement which forced his thoughts away from himself. To unbolt the ponderous doors at either end of the passage which led into the bank, took him what seemed an age; but at last he succeeded in getting them open. A cloud of smoke enveloped him as he went in, and all but drove him back. He burst through it with a confused sense of flames and suffocation, and blazing sheets of red, that waved long tongues towards him to catch him as he rushed through them; but, notwithstanding, he forced his way into Mr. Crediton's room, where he knew there were valuable papers. He thought of nothing as he rushed through the jaws of death; neither of Kate, nor of his past life, nor of his home, nor of any of those things which are supposed to gleam

upon the mind in moments of supreme danger. He thought only of the papers in Mr. Crediton's room. Unconsciously he formed an idea of the origin of the fire, as, panting, choked, and scorched, he gathered, without seeing them, into his arms the box of papers, and seized upon everything he could feel with his hands upon the table. He could see nothing, for his eyes were stinging with the smoke, and scorched with the flames. When he had grasped everything he could feel, with his senses failing him, he pushed blindly for the door, hoping, so far as he had wit enough to hope anything, that he might reach the front of the house, and be able to unloose its fastenings before he gave way. By this time there was a roaring of the fire in his ears; an insufferable smell of burning wood and paint; all his senses were assailed, even that of touch, which recoiled from the heated walls against which he staggered trying to find the door. At last the sharp pain with which he struck violently against it, cutting open his forehead, brought him partially to himself. He half-staggered half-fell into the passage, dropping upon his knees, for his arms were full, and he had no hand to support himself with. Then all at once a sudden wild gust of air struck him in the face from the other side; the flames, with (he thought) a cry, leaped at him from behind, and he fell prostrate, claspimg tight the papers he had recovered, and knew no more.

It was half an hour later when Fred Huntley, venturing into the narrow hall of the burning house after the first detachment of firemen had entered with their hatchets, found some one lying drenched with water from the engines, and looking like a calcined thing that would drop to powder at a touch, against the wall. The calcined creature moved when it was touched, and gave signs of life; but every one by this time had forgotten John in the greater excitement of the fire; and it had not occurred to Huntley even, the only one who knew much about him, to ask what had become of him. He was dragged out, not very gently, to the steps in front; and there, fortunately for John, was the porter who had been the cause of all the mischief, and who stood outside wringing his hands, and getting in everybody's way. "Look after him, you!" cried Fred, plunging in again to the heart of the conflict. Some of the clerks had arrived by this time, and were anxiously directing the fire-engines to play upon the strong room in which most of the valuables of the bank were placed. Fred Huntley was not noticeably destitute of courage, but he was more ready to put himself in the front when

the pioneers had passed before, and there were plenty of followers to support him behind. He took the command of affairs while John lay moaning, scorched, and drenched on the wet step, with people rushing past him, now and then almost treading on him, and pain gradually rousing him into consciousness. They had tried to take his charge from him and he had resisted, showing a dawn of memory. When the water from the hose struck him again in the face, he struggled half up, and sat and looked round him. "Good Lord, Mr. Mitford!" said Mr. Whichelo, the chief cashier, discovering him with consternation. "Take me somewhere," gasped John; "and take care of these," holding out his innocent booty. Mr. Whichelo rushed at him eagerly. "God bless you!" he cried; "it was that I was thinking of. How did you get it? have you been in the fire and the flames to fetch it, and saved my character?" cried the poor man, hysterically. "Hold your tongue, and take me somewhere!" cried John; and the next moment his senses had once more forsaken him, and he knew nothing about either blaze or flame.

The after incidents of the night, of which John was conscious only by glimpses, were — that he was carried to the inn opposite, his treasures taken from his arms and locked carefully away, and the doctor brought, who examined him, and shook his head, and said a great deal about a shock to the nerves. John was in one of his intervals of consciousness when this was said, and raised himself from the strange distance and dreaminess in which he seemed to be lying. "I have had no shock to my nerves," he said. "I'm burnt and sore and soaking, that's all." Plaster me or mend me somehow." And this effort saved him from the feverish confusion into which he was falling. When he came to himself he felt that he was indeed sore all over, with minute burns in a hundred places about his person; his hair and his eyelashes scorched off, and his skin all blistered and burning. Perhaps it

was the pain which kept him in full possession of his faculties for all the rest of the night. Then he felt it was not the fire he had cared for, nor the possible loss, but only the pure satisfaction of doing something. When they told him the fire was got under, the strong room saved, and that nothing very serious had happened, the news did not in the least excite him. He had asked as if he was profoundly concerned, and he was scarcely even interested. "Pain has often that effect," he heard the doctor say. "This kind of irritating, ever-present suffering, absorbs the mind. Of course he cares. Tell him again, that the news may get into his mind." And then somebody told him again, and John longed to cry, What the devil is that to me! but restrained himself. It was nothing to him; and the burning on his skin was not much: it was nothing indeed to the burning in his heart. She had discussed with another matters which were between themselves. She had sent another to report on his looks and his state of mind; there was between her and another man a secret alliance which he was not intended to know. The blood seemed to boil in John's veins as he lay tossing through the restless night, trying in vain to banish the thought from him. But the thought, being intolerable, would not be banished. It lay upon him, and tore at him as the vultures tore Prometheus. She had discussed their engagement with Fred Huntley; taken him into her confidence — that confidence which should have been held sacred to another. John was thrown back suddenly and wildly upon himself. His heart throbbed and swelled as if it would break, and felt as if hot irons had seared it. He imagined them sitting together, talking him over. He even framed the account of this accident which Huntley would give. He would be at her ear, while John was banished. He denied that it had been a shock to his nerves; and yet his nerves had received such a shock as he might never recover in his life.

DR. ANGUS SMITH has read a paper "On the Organic Matter in the Air," before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, with reference to the recent lecture of Prof. Tyndall; and from this paper it appears that Dr. A. Smith has laboured incessantly upon the subject since 1846, and was the first to discover much of what is known on the question.

PROF. W. S. JEVONS lately read, at Manchester, a paper "On the so-called Molecular Movements of Microscopic Particles." He is inclined to consider the motion due to electricity, by the close analogy with the circumstances in which electricity is produced by the hydro-electric machine of Armstrong and Faraday.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
MISS AUSTEN AND MISS MITFORD.

In the beginning of last century, two young women bearing names which are now as familiar as the greatest to English readers, were making themselves very pleasant to their surroundings in the very heart of all the stillness and decorum of rural gentility. They both belonged to that class of English gentry with a clerical tinge, which is in some respects the pleasantest class to be met with in the little hierarchy of country life. They were well born and well connected, with a modest position which not even poverty could seriously affect, and the habit from their childhood of meeting people of some distinction and eminence, and of feeling themselves possessed of so much share in the bigger business of the world as is given by the fact of having friends and relations playing a real part in it. No educational process is more effectual than this simple fact, and Jane Austen and Mary Mitford were both within its influence. They were both well educated, according to the requirements of their day, though the chances are that neither could have passed her examination for entrance into any lady's college, or had the remotest chance with the University Inspectors; and it is not unconsolatory to find, by the illumination which a little lamp of genius here and there thus throws upon the face of the country, that women full of cultivation and refinement have existed for generations before ladies' colleges were thought of, notwithstanding the universal condemnation bestowed upon our old-fashioned canons of feminine instruction. Miss Austen was a little girl in the parsonage of Steventon in Hertfordshire when Miss Mitford's mother lived in the parsonage of Ashe close by. There was thus even a link of local connection between them. The Mitfords were the finer of the two families, boasting higher connections on both sides of the house; but the Austens were of irreproachable gentility, with offshoots that kept continually increasing the consequence of the original stem, adding other names and new estates to the well-to-do numerous affectionate race. It became a kind of clan as years went on, a thing which not unfrequently happens in the second or third generation to the descendants of a considerable family. Austens and Leighs and Knights, all originally Austen, there were so many brothers and sisters, and cousins and uncles and nephews among them, that ordinary society became almost unnecessary to the prolific race. The Mitfords were different—their relations were grand and distant ones, to be

seen only now and then on a splendid expedition which counted like an era in a life; and theirs was the highly concentrated, intensified existence of a very small family living entirely for each other, and exhibiting between themselves that ecstatic adoring love which it is so difficult for the more sober portions of the world to understand, and which outsiders are so apt to smile at.

The education of the two young women of genius was thus different. Jane Austen grew up to womanhood in a gentle obscurity, one of many.—her individual existence lost in the more noisy claims of the brothers, whose way in the world has to be the subject of so much thought; while the boys' settlement in life, their Oxford successes, their going to sea, their early curacies, and prize-money, filled everybody's mind. Jane, it is evident, gave nobody any trouble. Even her elder sister, Cassandra, to whom she was specially devoted, had a story which must have thrilled the quiet vicarage. She was betrothed to a lover who was poor, and who went to the West Indies to push his fortune—"to make the crown a pound," and there died. No doubt the maiden widow, who remained faithful to him all her life, filled up every corner vacant from the boys in the tender heart of Steventon vicarage; and Jane, fair, sprightly, and sweet, with no story, no grief, no unfortunate lover or unsettled position to give her affairs a factitious interest, was only Jane in the affectionate house—a bright-eyed, light-footed girl—one of the creatures evidently born to marry and be the light of some other home.

Nothing can be more amusing and attractive than the glimpses, very brief and slight as they are, of this girl, through the much trellis-work and leafage of her nephew Mr. Austen Leigh's biography of her. It has not, indeed, any right to be called a biography; and were not the writer so frank and humble in his consciousness of the fact, the critic might be tempted to certain hackneyed comments on the common blunder of book-making. But Mr. Austen Leigh is aware of his imperfections and disarms us. What he does is to paint for us somewhat heavily the outside of the house in which she lived, with the honeysuckle and the roses climbing in at the windows; and, as we look, sometimes a pretty shadow will cross the curtain, a pleasant face look out, a voice quite unpretending in its sweetness be heard singing within. That is all: hazel eyes and natural curls of brown hair—round cheeks, a trifle too round, but all aglow with the clear, sweet colour of health and youth—a figure "rather tall and slender," a "step light

and firm." Not Jane Austen only, but hosts of sweet women besides her, might have sat for the picture. She took long walks with Cassandra, sometimes in patters, between the double hedgerows through the green Hertfordshire lanes. If Cassandra had been condemned to have her head cut off, their mother thought, Jane would have offered to share the punishment; and next to Cassandra, the sailor-boys of the family seem to have filled her heart. She was fond of knowing all about her neighbours, of hearing their gossip, and noting their ways, and laughing at them softly with that delicate fun which dull people never find out or understand. She was an accomplished needlewoman, great in satin stitch, giving her friends pretty presents of fairy housewives, filled with needles and thread, and a little copy of verses in the tiny pocket—and was not ashamed to spend a day, as young ladies in the country sometimes have to do, over some piece of dressmaking, accompanying it with the merriest talk. How pleasant is the picture! She read, too, whatever was going, with a young woman's natural universal appetite, and was delightful to the eye and dear to the heart of all the Austens, and all the Leighs, and all the Steventons. When the years went on, and this sweet young woman became aunt Jane, the change was so soft and slight as scarcely to count. She wore a cap over the pretty brown curls—not that she had any occasion to do so, for her pleasant life was only forty years long altogether, and such bright-eyed souls in the soft serenity of maidenhood do not grow old. But in youth and in maturity she was alike fenced from the outer world by troops of friends, called only by names of love—sister, daughter, aunt—all her life surrounded by every kind of relationship, and with no inducement to come down from her pedestal and go out into the bitter arena where the strong triumph and the needy struggle, except that prick of genius which is like the rising of the sap in the trees, or the bubble of the water at the spring, and must find utterance somehow in sparkle, or in foliage, or in song.

Mary Mitford was a very different being. She was an only child, the apple of their eye to her father and mother—infinately precocious, and encouraged in her precocity—set up between the two admiring foolish people who had given her birth as an idol to be worshipped, an oracle whose utterances were half inspired. Her education was the best that, according to ordinary rules, could be procured. She was sent to school in London, and encouraged in every attempt to distinguish herself which could

occur to the emulous mind of a school-girl; and in the midst of her little struggles and triumphs appears to us in her schoolroom writing such letters as an elderly friend might have written to the "dear darlings," who are her father and mother, letting loose her youthful opinion, and giving her advice in the most astonishing way. The Mitfords were rich in those days, or at least they had not yet finally left off the habit and sense of being rich; and their daughter did everything and learned everything which was considered right for a young lady of family and fashion to do. And the perfect freedom of the intercourse between herself and her parents, joined, no doubt, to a certain youthful confidence in her own judgment and wisdom, give a curious independence and air of maturity to what she says. At fifteen she announces her preference of Pope's translations of Homer to Dryden's, with all the energy and promptitude of her age. "Dryden is so fond of triplets and Alexandrines, that it is much heavier reading; and though he is reckoned a much more harmonious versifier than Pope, some of his lines," says the young critic, "are so careless, that I shall not be sorry when I have finished it. . . . I am now reading that beautiful opera of Metastasio, 'Themistocles;' and when I have finished that, I shall read Tasso's 'Jerusalem Delivered,'" she adds. "How you would dote on Metastasio, my sweet Tod!" (one of her names for her father.) "I am much flattered, my darlings," she writes, a little later, to both her parents, "by the praises you bestowed on my last letter, though I have not the vanity to think I deserve them. It has ever been my ambition to write like my darlings, though I fear I shall never attain their style."

This amiable, confident, affectionate, warm-hearted, self-assured girl, thus entering the world with many of the faults incident to the dangerous position of an only child, was born a letter-writer. For half a century after this she continued to pour out her rash, sudden judgments, opinions sometimes sound and sometimes superficial, and outbursts of exaggerated fondness chiefly addressed to her father, whom she continued until his death to address in the same undignified way. He was her "sweet Tod," her "best-beloved darling," her "itty boy," the recipient of a great deal of good advice, and now and then some admonition, but always the object of a gushing fondness, which even at fifteen must have concealed some unconscious half-contempt. Her letters are often amusing, and they are the kind of reading which quantities of peo-

ple delight in; but we question whether, after all, it is fair to a dead woman to lay bare all her little vanities, her self-importance, her hasty opinions, all her fluctuations from one fancy to another, and the misfortunes which have given shape and colour to her whole life. In saying this, we do not mean to imply that such a collection of letters should not be printed. The public has to be amused at all costs, and we can well imagine what a temptation they must have been to an executor. But still the reader cannot choose but be struck by the curious disadvantage to begin with in which poor Miss Mitford is placed by her fluent pen, in comparison with the more reticent woman whose name we have coupled with hers.

We have been so often told that the faculty of writing letters is a special gift, and one of the most charming of literary talents, that it is needless to say anything more on so hackneyed a subject. If it could be possible to put the real emotions of a life into such letters as form the three volumes now before us, they would no doubt be of infinite interest to all readers. But that, we well-know, is impossible; for perhaps no man or woman does ever in his or her life write more than a dozen letters which are wholly inspired by any vehement reality of sentiment. Miss Mitford has told us a great deal about her own life in the pleasantest way in the bits of autobiography which are scattered through her works; and the chief interest of her letters consists in the further revelations they make of her domestic history. In other respects they are not remarkable. Distinguished names, no doubt, occur here and there throughout their course; but the most well known persons among her correspondents (with the exception of Mrs. Barrett Browning, with whom she became intimate in the latter part of her life), were Haydon the painter and Charles Kemble. And all that she has to say about others is her own enthusiastic opinion of the moment, — her womanish admiration of Whitbread's fine head and natural eloquence; her half-doubting admiration of Scott; her snatches of very ordinary literary gossip about Moore and Byron. A sprinkling of well known names is not sufficient to give to a long series of private letters any title to be considered a contribution to the literary history of the time. What intelligent young lady of the present or any other period might not write to her correspondents as follows: — "Have you read Southey's Life of Nelson? . . . It is a work which I earnestly recommend to you as one of the most beautiful pieces of biography I ever met with."

Or again: "I never can read Miss Edgeworth's works without finding the wonderful predominance of the head over the heart."

. . . I am perfectly well inclined to agree with you in attributing the tiresome parts of her works to her prosing father." Or again: "Have you seen my Lord Byron's ode? and are you not shocked at the suicidal doctrine it inculcates? He will finish that way himself from fair weariness of life. But true courage makes a different ending." This is not giving us any information about Southey, or Byron, or the Edgeworths; and there is certainly nothing in the notes themselves to entitle them to the dignity of print.

The two books from which we are to draw any new sparks of light that may be in them, in respect to two women who have a special claim upon the interest of their country, are thus without any sound *raison d'être*, not specially called for, not conveying very much information that is new to us. But they form an occasion for recollecting over again, in one case, a series of works which have found for themselves a place among English classics; and, in the other, a great deal of genial, pleasant writing, — the brightest, sunshiny, rural sketches of a state of things which is daily changing, and may soon come to be purely historical. Miss Mitford has no right to a place in the same rank with Miss Austen; and yet there are qualities in her writings superior to Miss Austen's — a breadth and atmosphere impossible to the greater writer. The one recognizes a big world about her, even though she only draws it within the limited proportions of "Our Village" — a world full of different classes — rich and poor, small and great; whereas the other confines herself to a class — the class of which she has herself the most perfect knowledge — striking out with an extraordinary conscientiousness which one does not know whether to call self-will or self-denial, everything above and everything below. Lady Catherine de Burgh and the housekeeper at Pemberly — conventional types of the heaven above and the abyss below — are the only breaks which Miss Austen ever permits herself upon the level of her squirearchy; while Miss Mitford's larger heart takes in all the Joes and Pollys and Harriets of a country-side, and makes their wooings and jealousies as pleasant to us as if they were the finest ladies and gentlemen. To be sure, Miss Austen's ladies and gentlemen are seldom fine; but they are all to be found in the same kind of house with the same kind of surroundings. Their poverties, when they have any, are caused in a genteel way by the entail of an estate, or by the premature death of the father with-

out leaving an adequate provision for his lovely and accomplished girls. The neglect which leaves the delicate heroine without a horse to ride, or the injury conveyed in the fact that she has to travel post without a servant, is the worst that happens. If it were not that the class to which she thus confines herself was the one most intimately and thoroughly known to her, we should be disposed to consider it, as we have said, a piece of self-denial on Miss Austen's part to relinquish all stronger lights and shadows; but perhaps it is better to say that she was conscientious in her determination to describe only what she knew, and that nature aided principle in this singular limitation. Of itself, however, it throws a certain light upon her character, which is not the simple character it appears at the first glance, but one full of subtle power, keenness, finesse, and self-restraint — a type not at all unusual among women of high cultivation, especially in the retirement of the country, where such qualities are likely enough to be unappreciated or misunderstood.

Mr. Austen Leigh, without meaning it, throws out of his dim little lantern a passing gleam of light upon the fine vein of feminine cynicism which pervades his aunt's mind. It is something altogether different from the rude and brutal male quality that bears the same name. It is the soft and silent disbelief of a spectator who has to look at a great many things without showing any outward discomposure, and who has learned to give up any moral classification of social sins, and to place them instead on the level of absurdities. She is not surprised or offended, much less horror-stricken or indignant, when her people show vulgar or mean traits of character, when they make it evident how selfish and self-absorbed they are, or even when they fall into those social cruelties which selfish and stupid people are so often guilty of, not without intention, but yet without the power of realizing half the pain they inflict. She stands by and looks on, and gives a soft half-smile, and tells the story with an exquisite sense of its ridiculous side, and fine stinging yet soft-voiced contempt for the actors in it. She sympathizes with the sufferers, yet she can scarcely be said to be sorry for them; giving them unconsciously a share in her own sense of the covert fun of the scene, and gentle disdain of the possibility that meanness and folly and stupidity could ever really wound any rational creature. The position of mind is essentially feminine, and one which may be readily identified in the personal knowledge of most people. It is the natural result of the constant, though probably quite

unconscious, observation in which a young woman, with no active pursuit to occupy her, spends, without knowing it, so much of her time and youth. Courses of lectures, no doubt, or balls, or any decided out-of-door interest, interferes with this involuntary training; but such disturbances were rare in Miss Austen's day.

A certain soft despair of any one human creature ever doing any good to another — of any influence overcoming those habits and moods and peculiarities of mind which the observer sees to be more obstinate than life itself — a sense that nothing is to be done but to look on, to say perhaps now and then a softening word, to make the best of it practically and theoretically, to smile and hold up one's hands and wonder why human creatures should be such fools, — such are the foundations upon which the feminine cynicism which we attribute to Miss Austen is built. It includes a great deal that is amiable, and is full of toleration and patience, and that habit of making allowance for others which lies at the bottom of all human charity. But yet it is not charity, and its toleration has none of the sweetness which proceeds from that highest of Christian graces. It is not absolute contempt either, but only a softened tone of general disbelief — amusement, nay enjoyment, of all those humours of humanity which are so quaint to look at as soon as you dissociate them from any rigid standard of right or wrong. Miss Austen is not the judge of the men and women she collects round her. She is not even their censor to mend their manners; no power has constituted her her brother's keeper. She has but the faculty of seeing her brother clearly all round as if he were a statue, identifying all his absurdities, quietly jeering at him, smiling with her eyes without committing the indecorum of laughter. In one case only, so far as we can recollect, in the character of Miss Bates in "Emma," does she rise beyond this, and touch the region of higher feeling by comprehension of the natural excellence that lies under a ludicrous exterior. It is very lightly touched, but yet it is enough to show that she was capable of a tenderness for the object of her soft laughter — a capability which converts that laughter into something totally different from the gentle derision with which she regards the world in general. Human-kind stands low in her estimation, in short, as a mass. There are a few pleasant young people here and there to redeem it, or even an old lady now and then, or in the back-ground a middle-aged couple who are not selfish, nor vulgar, nor exacting. But there is a great deal more amusement

to be got out of the mean people, and to them accordingly she inclines.

We have said that Mr. Austen Leigh throws a little feeble light on this particular of the great novelist's character. In almost the only view of her youth which he is able to give us, he tells us of "an old copy-book containing several tales," childish essays at composition, which were "generally intended to be nonsensical." Her first book was written when she was twenty, so that it is a little difficult to divine exactly what her biographer means when he speaks of a time when she was "quite a girl." But he goes on to inform us of "another stage of her progress, during which she produced several tales not without merit, but which she considered unworthy of publication. . . . Instead of presenting faithful copies of nature," he adds, "these tales were generally burlesques, ridiculing the improbable events and exaggerated statements which she had met with in sundry silly romances." Such a commencement is not without its significance. A girl who ridiculed improbable events and exaggerated sentiments between the ages of sixteen and twenty, must already have begun to learn the lesson congenial to her temperament, and commenced that amused, indifferent, keen-sighted, impartial inspection of the world as a thing apart from herself, and demanding no excess of sympathy, which is characteristic of all the work of her life.

It is not to be supposed, however, that our opinion of Miss Austen or her work is lessened by this view of her character. A fine poetical enthusiasm for her fellow-creatures, and belief in them, might have been a sentiment for which we should have felt greater sympathy, as in itself it seems more natural and congenial to the early speculations of youth. But unfortunately enthusiasm has a great tendency to make itself ridiculous in its earlier manifestations, and could have had no share in the production of such a book as "Pride and Prejudice," or the charming, sprightly pages of "Emma." Nothing but a mind of this subtle, delicate, speculative temper could have set before us pictures which are at once so refined and so trenchant, so softly feminine and polite, and so remorselessly true.

If contrast be expedient to bring out the full force of individual character, no more effectual foil could be found than by placing Mary Mitford by Jane Austen's side. The fat, roundabout, roly-poly girl, who was winning prizes in her London school, and chattering to her "dear darlings," and pouring out every funny little exaggerated sentiment and clever little bit of observa-

tion that was in her, with the most charming absence of humour, when the pretty young lady in the Steventon vicarage had begun to write her novels, was as full of enthusiasm as the other was destitute of it. But then her enthusiasm embraced everything with a want of perspective as amusing as her own utter want of any perception of its absurdity. Her father was her "darling," but so was her dog and her owl, and a multiplicity of other pets. She finds Whitbread, whom she sees at a public meeting, to be "exquisitely handsome — a most elegant figure," said the ardent girl, "and a voice which I could listen to with transport, even if he spoke in an unknown tongue!" Her friend Miss Rowden's poem, "The Pleasures of Friendship," she finds equal to "the celebrated works on 'Memory' and 'Hope,'" and its descriptions are, she considers, "exquisitely beautiful." Whatever she loves becomes by an instantaneous process beautiful to her. The glamour of the poets is in her eyes. The father who ruined all her earthly prospects, and made her a literary drudge through all her mature womanhood, continues to receive the same worshipping admiration and love from her after all the illusions of youth were dispelled, and she had been taught to estimate his deficiencies by something approaching a just standard. The same characteristics accompany her when she begins her most living work, the pleasant records of "Our Village." She is, like her more illustrious companion, a spectator in the tranquil breathing scene; yet what a difference is there in the spectatorship! While Miss Austen sees only the ladies and gentlemen, the genial blue eyes of the younger woman warm in a kindly sympathy over all the world. She spies at once, not the gentry at their drawing-room windows, but the cheerful haymakers in the field, the women standing at their doors; and with eyes shining with fun, and yet tender with sympathy, stops to point out to us the cobbler and his wife, the poor shopkeeper overwhelmed with debt and care, the pretty Letty or Patty, with red eyes, in a corner, who has quarrelled with her lover. Miss Mitford's world is a world twice as full as Miss Austen's. It is indeed overflowing with life, like a medieval picture — passengers on all the ways, market-carts as well as carriages, and Dame Whittaker with her great basket, and little Harry on the dusty path, as well as my lady with her footman behind her, who perhaps, if he is an honest lad, and belongs to the country-side, has his story too. And though the villagers are sometimes tyrannical and unjust, and very

cross to their young people, yet there is always a soft place in their hearts somewhere or other, a string that being touched will discourse gentler music.

Miss Austen's work is infinitely more perfect; she is a far greater artist, going deeper and seeing farther, but her world is not such a pleasant world as that of her contemporary. The skies are often leaden and still in the greater picture, but in the lesser they are always aglow with sunshine or tumultuous with real clouds; there is always a fresh air blowing, and the cottage windows shine, and the surface of the earth is gay with flowers. Whether it is peculiar to Berkshire or to Miss Mitford one cannot quite tell; but one feels it must be Berkshire, every detail is so true. What banks of violets, what primroses by the hedgerows, what thickets of honeysuckle and rose! and were there ever such geraniums as those in the garden, which is so little and so gorgeous, and so carefully tended, where our friend sits writing hard by, and her handsome father, with his lofty white head, and all his sins forgiven, loafs about in the sunshine, complacently conscious of having spent three fortunes; and Ben is audible in the distance grooming the white pony, or trim Harriet crosses the corner of the flower-beds with her white apron blazing in the summer brightness? The picture is a little false, because, if we could look under the surface, the handsome old father is a worthless personage enough, notwithstanding his beauty; and his daughter, as she writes, has a sore heart, and does not know how the bills are to be paid, and is weary beyond description of drudging at her pen all day long for daily bread. Miss Austen would set it before you in three sentences, so that you would no longer see any beauty in the scene. She would impale Dr. Mitford with a keen sudden touch and the usual smile in her eyes; and however sensible she was of his daughter's goodness, could not resist the temptation of letting you know that Miss Mary was fat and somewhat gushing, and thought very well of her literary fancy-work. And Ben and Harriet and the white pony, those half-seen accessories, which give population and fulness to the other sketch, would disappear altogether from Miss Austen's canvas, along with the blazing geraniums, and all the soft delicious breathing of the more fragrant flowers. It would be much finer, clearer, distinct as daylight—a thing done in aquafortis, and capable of outliving the world; but for our poor part, we would rather have Miss Mitford's sweet flowery picture, with Ben's suppressed hiss in the background,

and all the painful humanity underneath suppressed too, as nature commands when the sun is shining and all the world is gay. It is more superficial, and, so far as art is concerned, is on an infinitely lower level, and yet it is truer to all those deep instinctive unities which art may sometimes ignore, but which nature never ignores.

There is one curious feature of personal resemblance in the lives of the two women thus placed before us which, considering their occupation, is noticeable enough, and which at the same time gives a very flat contradiction to one of the most popular of fallacies. Miss Austen was a born novelist, and Miss Mitford a teller of love-stories; they were neither of them recluses, nor in any way shut out from the world. The first was pretty and full of charm; the second, though not pretty, yet possessed all the attractions which a sprightly intelligence, and sweet temper, and most amiable disposition could give. And yet there is not the ghost of a romance belonging to either of them. If either loved or was beloved again, she must have done it in absolute secrecy, which is next to impossible. In the face of the popular notion that love is the chief occupation of a woman's life—or let us say, at least, of a young woman's life—an idea which, no doubt, both of these women over and over again promulgated—stands this curious fact: Miss Austen and Miss Mitford were surrounded with other affections and occupations—their lives were full and showed no lack; and it would be hard to find any trace of that (let our readers pardon us the horrible word) sexual unrest and discontent which, at a later period, found a startling revelation in the works of Charlotte Brontë, and have since been repeated *ad nauseam* in many inferior pages—in the productions of either. Through all the voluminous correspondence just given to the public by Miss Mitford's executors, and through the pleasanter and more concentrated notes, and introductions, and reminiscences in which she herself gave the public such indication as pleased her of her own life, there is not a word that suggests a lover; there is not even a recollection such as calls the soft sigh, which is more pleasurable than pain, and the tender smile of gratitude and etherialized vanity from an old lady's lips when a name or an allusion brings before her something which might have been. There is nothing in all Mary Mitford's much utterance which conveys the faintest idea that anything could ever have been, except her devotion to her parents, her care of them as if she had been the parent and they the children, and her

warm-hearted effusive regard for her friends. Perhaps, indeed, the want may be accounted for in her case by the mere fact of this strange transposition of nature which made her the real head of the little family, with all the care upon her head, and all the work to do, a combination of circumstances entirely unfavourable to love-making—if it were not that love-making is one of those perverse things which have a special tendency to produce themselves where their presence is embarrassing, and where they are not wanted. But not even the fact that a love-story would have been very much in her way, and added greatly to her embarrassments, seems to have brought that climax of youthful experience to Miss Mitford. In Miss Austen's case there was nothing, so far as one can see, to hinder the natural romance. She had no overwhelming duties upon her head, nothing to bind her to maidenhood, no tragical necessities of any kind to damp her courage or restrain life in its ordinary course. Yet all her biographer can say on this interesting subject is—"Of Jane herself I know of no tale of love to relate." Mr. Austen Leigh quotes from one of her reviewers the not unnatural idea that in depicting the hidden and tenacious love of one of her heroines, she was drawing from personal recollection, but only to assure us that "this conjecture was wide of the mark. She did not, indeed, pass through life," he adds, "without being the object of strong affection, and it is probable that she met with some whom she found attractive; but her taste was not easily satisfied, nor her heart to be lightly won. I have no reason to think that she ever felt any attachment by which the happiness of her life was at all affected."

We are thus resolutely denied a love-tale in both their lives, which is hard. Had they been married women whose romance had ended naturally in the commonplace way, the omission would have been less noteworthy; but there is a charm in the love which has never come to anything—the tender, pathetic, sweet recollection laid up in a virgin life, amid the faded rose-leaves and fallen flowers of youth—which is infinitely sweet and touching,—more touching than the successful and prosperous can ever be. This satisfaction, however, is, we repeat, denied us. There is no such soft secret in these two good, and pleasant, and beautiful lives. No man's existence could be more entirely free from sentiment. All is honest, and moderate, and open as the day. If love is a woman's chief business, then here were two very sweet women who had no share in it. It is a want, but

we have no right to complain, seeing that they did not shape their lives to please us, though they have shaped various other lines of existence in which the deficiency is supplied. Such a question, it is unnecessary to say, could not have been discussed by a contemporary; but the critic at this distance may be permitted to regret that there is not somewhere a faded bunch of violets, or some dead forget-me-not, to be thrown with the myrtle and the bay of their country's appreciation, upon these two maiden graves.

Miss Austen began her literary work at so early an age that its skill and extreme refinement, as well as the peculiar point of view from which she regarded the world, becomes more and more wonderful. It is a very difficult thing to realize how a brain of one-and-twenty could have identified such a family as the Bennets, such a character as Mr. Collins, and could have willingly filled up her background with figures such as those of the female Bingleys, Wickham, Lady Catherine, and the rest. Nothing could be more lifelike, and more utterly real. The household is not described, but rises vividly before us as if we had visited it yesterday, with all its rusticity and ignorance, its eager thirst for pleasure, and incapacity to perceive the bad taste and futility of its own efforts. The first wonder that occurs to us is how Jane and Elizabeth should have found a place in such a family. The eldest is all sweetness and grace and beauty; the second brightly intelligent, quick to perceive and equally quick to take up false impressions, but clever and affectionate and honest to the highest degree; while every one else in the house is a study of absurdity and vulgarity of one sort or another. Miss Austen had too much genius to fall into the vulgar error of making her heroes and heroines all perfect, and relieving them against a background of unalloyed villany, but her actual conception of the world, as shown in her first completed work, is not much less elevated. The background is full, not of villains, but of fools, out of the midst of whom the heroes and heroines rise in all the glory of superior talents and more elevated character. The power that is spent in setting forth these fools—their endless variety—the different shapes in which conceit, and vanity, and selfishness, and vulgar ambition display themselves—the wonderful way in which they amalgamate and enhance each other, now and then rising into the successes of triumphant cunning, or sinking to pure folly once more,—is set before us with a skill which is quite marvellous. It is all so

common — never rising above the level of ordinary life, leaving nothing (so think the uninstructed) to imagination or invention at all — and yet what other hand has ever been able to detach such a group from the obscure level of their ordinary fate? Mr. Collins, for instance, who is the heir of Mr. Bennet's entailed estate, and who, with a certain quaint sense of justice which enhances his self-importance, comes prepared to propose to one of the daughters, whom he is obliged to deprive of their inheritance. We give so much explanation, with a certain shame at the very possibility that Mr. Collins should want a formal introduction to any portion of the British public; but yet it is true that the young ones are not so well up in the relationships of the Bennets as we could wish them to be. The sublime and undisturbed complacency of his arrival, when he compliments Mrs. Bennet on having so fine a family of daughters, "and added that he did not doubt her seeing them all in time well disposed of in marriage," is inimitable. "I am very sensible, madam, of the hardship to my fair cousins," he says, "and could say much on the subject, but I am cautious of appearing forward and precipitate. But I can assure the young ladies that I come prepared to admire them. At present I will not say more, but perhaps when we are better acquainted —" When he receives Elizabeth's refusal to marry him with undisturbed complacency, attributing it to "your wish of increasing my love by suspense according to the usual practice of elegant females," the situation rises to one of the most genuine comedy, and our only regret is that Mr. Collins's adventures have never been adapted for the stage.

Miss Austen does not even let her victim escape her when he is married and has left the central scene. She pursues him to his home with the smile growing a little broader in her eyes. "Elizabeth was prepared to see him in all his glory; and she could not help fancying that in displaying the good proportions of his room, its aspect and its furniture, he addressed himself particularly to her, as if wishing to make her feel what she had lost in refusing him." His pompous assurance that "he has no hesitation in saying" that his goddess and patroness, Lady Catherine, will include his cousin in her invitations — his triumph when the party is asked to dinner — the pride with which he takes his seat at the foot of the table by her ladyship's command, looking "as if he felt that life could furnish nothing greater" — the "delighted alacrity" with which he carved and ate and praised — his game at cards with his august patroness after dinner,

in which "he was employed in agreeing to everything her ladyship said, thanking her for every fish he won, and apologizing if he thought he won too many," — are all so many touches which add perfection to the picture; and when we take our parting glance of Mr. Collins, watching the country road from his "book-room," and hastening to inform his wife and her friends every time Miss De Burgh drives by in her phaeton, we feel that the power of consistent remorseless ridicule can no further go. There is not a moment's faltering, nor the ghost of an inclination on the part of the author to depart from her wonderful conception. He stands before us tall and grave and pompous, wrapt in a cloud of solemn vanity, servility, stupidity, and spitefulness, but without the faintest gleam of self-consciousness or suspicion of the ridiculous figure he cuts; and his author with no pity in her heart, walks round and round him, giving here and there a skilful touch to bring out the picture. It is amazing in its unity and completeness — a picture perhaps unrivalled, certainly unsurpassed, in its way. It is, we repeat, cruel in its perfection.

Whether it is not too cruel to make the wife of this delightful Mr. Collins share so completely in his creator's estimate of him is a different matter. "When Mr. Collins could be forgotten there was really a great air of comfort throughout, and by Charlotte's evident enjoyment of it Elizabeth supposed he must be often forgotten" — the unflinching narrative goes on. "The room in which the ladies sat was backward, and Elizabeth at first had rather wondered that Charlotte should not prefer the dining-parlour for common use — it was a better-sized room and had a pleasanter aspect; but she soon saw that her friend had an excellent reason for what she did, for Mr. Collins would undoubtedly have been much less in his own apartment had they sat in one equally lively; and she gave Charlotte credit for the arrangement." This is rather diabolical, it must be owned, and there is a calmness of acquiescence in the excellent Charlotte's arrangement which it takes all the reader's fortitude to stomach. It is possible that the very youth of the author may have produced this final stroke of unexampled consistency; for youth is always more or less cruel, and is slow to acknowledge that even the most stupid and arrogant of mortals has his rights.

Mr. Collins, however, is one of the most distinct and original portraits in the gallery of fiction, and we accept him gladly as a real contribution to our knowledge of humankind; not a contribution certainly which

will make us more in love with our fellow-creatures, but yet so lifelike, so perfect and complete, touched with so fine a wit and so keen a perception of the ridiculous, that the picture once seen remains a permanent possession. And when we are told that the Bennet family, with all its humours—the father who is so good and sensible, and yet such an unmitigated bear; the mother whom he despises and ridicules without hesitation, even to his heroine-daughters who accept his sarcastic comments as the most natural thing in the world; the stupid pompous Mary, the loud and noisy, heartless and shameless Lydia—are all drawn with an equally fine and delicate touch, we have not a word to say against it. We acknowledge its truth, and yet we rebel against this pitiless perfection of art. It shocks us as much as it could possibly have shocked Mr. Darcy, to allow that these should be the immediate surroundings of the young woman whom we are called upon to take to our hearts. We blush for the daughter who blushes for her mother. We hate the lover who points out to her, even in self-defence, the vulgarities and follies of her family. A heroine must be superior, it is true, but not so superior as this; and it detracts ever so much from the high qualities of Elizabeth when we see how very ready she is to be moved by a sense of the inferiority of her mother and sisters, how ashamed she is of their ways, and how thankful to think that her home will be at a distance from theirs.

Curiously enough, it would seem that Miss Austen herself felt for this same Elizabeth, and for her alone, the enthusiasm of a parent for a child. "I have got my own darling child from London," she writes to her sister, in a little flutter of pleasure and excitement. "Miss B—dined with us on the very day of the book's coming, and in the evening we fairly set at it and read fully half the first volume to her, prefacing that having intelligence from Henry that such a book would soon appear, we had desired him to send it as soon as it came out; and I believe it passed with her unsuspected. She was amused, poor soul! That she could not help, you know, with two such people to lead the way, but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth. I must confess that I think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least I do not know." In a later letter she adds—"Fanny's praise is very gratifying. My hopes were tolerably strong of her, but nothing like a certainty. Her liking Darcy and Elizabeth is enough; she might hate all the others if she would." This is as curious

a piece of revelation as we know, and proves that the young woman who had just given so original a work to the world was in reality quite unaware of its real power, and had set her heart upon her hero and heroine like any schoolgirl. Our beloved Mr. Collins, upon whom the spectator would be tempted to think a great deal of pains and some proportionate anxiety must have been expended, evidently goes for very little with his maker. It is her lovers she is thinking of, a commonplace pair enough, while we are full of her inimitable foils, who are not at all commonplace. This curious fact disorders our head a little, and makes us ponder and wonder whether our author is in reality the gentle cynic we have concluded her to be, or if she has produced all these marvels of selfish folly unawares, without knowing what she was doing, or meaning anything by it. Genius, however, goes a great deal deeper than conscious meaning, and has its own way, whatever may be the intentions of its owner; and we but smile at the novelist's strange delusion as we set aside Elizabeth and Darcy, the one a young woman very much addicted to making speeches, very pert often, fond of having the last word, and prone to hasty judgments, with really nothing but her prettiness and a certain sharp smartness of talk to recommend her; and the other a very ordinary young man, quite like hosts of other young men, with that appearance of outward pride and *hauteur* which is so captivating to the youthful feminine imagination, though it must be admitted that he possesses an extraordinary amount of candour and real humility of mind under this exterior. It is curious to realize what a shock it must have given to the feelings of the young novelist when she found how little her favourite pair had to do with the successes of their own story, and how entirely her secondary characters, in their various and vivid originality, carried the day over her first.

"Sense and Sensibility," which was really the first of Miss Austen's publications, as well as the first production of her youthful brain, has fewer salient points. There is nothing in it that can approach within a hundred miles of the perfection of Mr. Collins. The Miss Steeles are simply vulgar and disagreeable, and we can scarcely be grateful for the vivid drawing of two persons whom we should be sorry ever to see again, and who really contribute nothing to our amusement, except so far as the fluttered sensibilities of the eldest in respect to "the Doctor" are concerned. No doubt the foolishness of Sir John Middleton, who is so much afraid of being alone that the addition of

two people to the population of London is a matter of delight to him; and of his wife, whose folly is concentrated in adoration of her children; and Mrs. Palmer, who laughs loudly at her husband's insolence, and calls heaven and earth to witness how droll he is, — are amusing enough in their way; but Marianne's sensibility is not amusing, and we find it utterly impossible to take any interest in her selfish and high-flown wretchedness. Elinore's sense and self-restraint, though so much superior in a moral point of view, are scarcely more enlivening; and the heroes are about as weak specimens of the genus hero as one could desire to see: that, however, would be immaterial but for the absence of the rich background with its amazing multiplicity of character; for Shakespeare himself cannot always confer interest upon his *jeune premier*, the first gentleman of the story. The same criticism may be applied to "Mansfield Park," which is the least striking of the whole series, and though full of detached scenes, and still more of detached sentences, quite wonderful in their power of description, is dull and lengthy as a whole, and not agreeable.

But Miss Austen is herself again when she comes to the story of "Emma," which, next to "Pride and Prejudice," is, in our opinion, her best work. "Emma" was the work of her mature mind. She was but one-and-twenty when she created Mr. Collins, and surrounded the heroine whom she regarded with a girl's sympathy with so many repulsive and odious, yet perfectly-depicted, characters. Perhaps there was something of the inexperience and ignorance of youth in this device — the natural impulse to exalt the favourite, and win all the more love for her by encircling her with people whom it was impossible to love. Our novelist had left her youth behind her, and her first home, and all the early conditions of her life, before Emma Woodhouse became her heroine; and there is a sweetness about this book which is not to be found in any of the others. There is scarcely one character in "Pride and Prejudice" for whom we can feel any kindly sympathy, except, perhaps, Jane, the soft, pretty elder sister, who is little more than a shadow upon the full and vigorous landscape. But in "Emma" there is nobody to be hated, which is a curious difference. Kindness has stole into the authoress's heart. The malicious, brilliant wit of youth has softened into a better understanding of the world. Mr. Woodhouse is very trying in his invalidism, and we sympathize deeply with his visitors when the sweetbread and asparagus are sent away from their very lips as not cooked

enough, and gruel, thin, but not too thin, is recommended in its place; but on the whole we like the courteous, kindly, troublesome old man; and Miss Bates, no doubt, is a person we would fly from in dismay did she live in our village; and had she belonged to the "Pride and Prejudice" period, no doubt she would have been as detestable as she was amusing. But other lights have come to the maturer eyes, and the endless flutter of talk, the never-ending still-beginning monologue, the fussy, wordy, indiscreet, uninteresting old maid is lighted up with a soft halo from the heart within. Instead of impaling her on the end of her spear, like Mr. Collins and Mrs. Bennet, her author turns her outside in with an affectionate banter — a tender amusement which changes the whole aspect of the picture. It is not that the fun is less, or the keenness of insight into all the many manifestations of foolishness, but human sympathy has come in to sweeten the tale, and the brilliant intellect has found out, somehow, that all the laughable beings surrounding it — beings so amusingly diverse in their inanity and unreason — are all the same mortal creatures, with souls and hearts within them. How Miss Austen came to find this out, we cannot tell. But it is pleasant to see that she had made the discovery. In "Emma" everything has a softer touch. The sun shines as it never shone over the Bennets. This difference of atmosphere, indeed, is one of the most remarkable points in the change. We suppose we are told sometimes that it was a fine day in "Pride and Prejudice," but so far as our own perceptions go, the sky is very leaden, and there is little of the variety and vicissitude of nature in the monotonous landscape. We have a feeling that the Bennet girls were always muddy when they walked to Meriton, and that the wind, which blew in their faces and sometimes improved their complexions, was a damp ungenial sort of wind. But in "Emma" the sun shines, and the playful soft breezes blow, and the heroine herself, with all her talents and quickwittedness, is as absurd as heart could desire, and makes such mistakes as only a clever girl, very *entetée* and addicted to her own opinion, very wilful, and unreasonable, and hasty, and charming, could be expected to make. Miss Austen no longer believes in her, or gives her all the honours of heroine, as she did to her Elizabeth, but laughs tenderly at her *protégée*, and takes pleasure in teasing her, and pointing out all her innocent mistakes; one after another she falls into them, and scrambles out, and falls once more — and is overwhelmed with distress, and hates herself,

and dries her eyes, and takes the bit in her teeth and is off again. We do not wonder that Mr. Knightley finds it a dangerous amusement to watch, and try to guide her in her vagaries; and no doubt he had a hard time of it when he had finally secured her, in that period that comes after Miss Austen gives her up to him, but, we don't doubt, liked it all the same.

And it is impossible to conceive a more perfect piece of village geography, a scene more absolutely real. Highbury, with Ford's shop in the High Street, and Miss Bates's rooms opposite, the parlour on the first floor, with windows from which you can see all that is going on, and, indeed, call to your friends down below, and hold conversations with them. And the vicarage lane at one end of the town, which is muddy, and where the young vicar from his study can see the young ladies passing on their way to their cottage pensioners, and has time to get his hat and umbrella and join them as they come back. And Hartfield, with its pretty shrubberies, standing well out of the town, a dignified conclusion for the walks of the ladies, whom Mr. Woodhouse is so glad to see; and Randalls further on, with its genial sanguine master, and the happy, quiet, middle-aged wife, who has been Emma's governess, and is still "poor Miss Taylor" to Emma's father. Nothing could be more easy than to make a map of it, with indications where the London road strikes off, and by which turning Frank Churchhill, on his tired horse, will come from Richmond. We know it as well as if we had lived there all our lives, and visited Miss Bates every other day.

Miss Austen's books did not secure her any sudden fame. They stole into notice so gradually and slowly, that even at her death they had not reached any great height of success. "Northanger Abbey," perhaps her prettiest story, as a story, and "Persuasion," which is very charming and full of delicate touches, though marked with the old imperfection which renders every character a fool except the heroic pair who hold their place in the foreground — were published only after her death, the MS. having been sold for ten pounds to a careless country bookseller, from whom it was repurchased, after the others had risen into fame. We are told that at her death all they had produced of money was but seven hundred pounds, and but a moderate modicum of praise. We cannot say we are in the least surprised at this fact; it is, we think, much more surprising that they should at length have climbed into the high place they now hold. To the general public, which loves to sym-

pathize with the people it meets in fiction, to cry with them, and rejoice with them, and take a real interest in all their concerns, it is scarcely to be expected that books so cold and keen, and making so little claim upon their sympathy, would ever be popular. "One of the ablest men of my acquaintance," said Mr. Austen Leigh, "said in that kind of jest which has much earnest in it, that he had established it in his own mind as a new test of ability whether people could or could not appreciate Miss Austen's merits." The standard is real enough. A certain amount of culture and force of observation must be presupposed in any real independent admiration of these books. They are not the kind of books which catch the popular fancy at once without pleasing the critic — a power sometimes possessed by very imperfect and unsatisfactory performances; neither do they belong to that highest class of all which takes every variety of imagination by storm, and steps into favour without any probation. They are rather of the class which attracts the connoisseur, which charms the critical and literary mind, and which, by dint of persistency and iteration, is carried by the superior rank of readers into a half-real half-fictional universality of applause. Perhaps the effort has been more successful in the case of Miss Austen than it has been with any other writer. Her works have become classic, and it is now the duty of every student of recent English literature to be more or less acquainted with them. Authority was never better employed. "The best judges" have here, for once, done the office of an Academy, and laureated a writer whom the populace would not have been likely to laureate, but whom it has learned to recognize.

There is, however, one quaint instance of appreciation, recorded in the Memoir, which took place in her lifetime. The Prince-Regent admired Miss Austen's novels much, and sent her word through her doctor that she might go and see Carlton House with all its riches — a permission which we cannot but think must have been more honourable than delightful. She took the trouble to do it, however, and there met a Mr. Clarke, librarian to his Royal Highness, who forthwith took her in hand. This gentleman, so far as can be judged by his letters, was a personage altogether after Miss Austen's heart, and who might have stepped out of one of her own books. He gives her permission unasked to dedicate one of her books to the Regent — a permission, by the way, which we do not clearly understand if she ever availed herself of;

and, in addition, he proposes to her a subject for a book. "I also, dear madam," writes this ingenious gentleman, "wished to be allowed to ask you to delineate in some future work the habits of life and character and enthusiasm of a clergyman who should pass his time between the metropolis and the country, who should be something like Beattie's minstrel —

'Silent when glad, affectionate though shy,
And in his looks was most demurely sad;
And now he laughed aloud, though none knew
why.'

Neither Goldsmith, nor La Fontaine in his 'Tableau de Famille,' have, in my mind, quite delineated an English clergyman, at least of the present day — fond of and engaged in literature, no man's enemy but his own. Pray, dear madam, think of these things."

This tempting, not to say solemn, suggestion did not move the novelist, which must have seemed a strange fact to Mr. Clarke. She answers him with admirable gravity, demurely setting herself forth as "the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress," and consequently quite incapable of "drawing such a clergyman as you give the sketch of. . . . Such a man's conversation," she adds, "must at times be on subjects of science and philosophy, of which I know nothing, or at least be occasionally abundant in quotations and allusions which a woman who, like me, knows only her own mother tongue, and has read little in that, would be totally without the power of giving." How Miss Austen must have chuckled secretly over this wonderful suggestion! How deeply tempted she must have been to transfer the librarian himself, if not his "enthusiastic clergyman," to her canvas! But even this answer does not discourage Mr. Clarke. Some time after he was appointed English secretary to Prince Leopold, who was then about to be married to the Princess Charlotte; and he does not lose a moment apparently in venturing a new suggestion, which was that "an historical romance illustrative of the august house of Coburg would just now be very interesting." Mr. Collins himself could not have done better. His clever correspondent exults over him; she gives him the gravest answers, and draws her victim out. She is quite inferior to the undertaking, she tells him with comic composure. Mr. Austen Leigh, however, does not seem to see the fun, but gravely comments upon it, observing that Mr. Clarke should have recollected the warning of the wise man, "Force not

the current of the river," a conclusion scarcely less amusing than the preceding narrative. It appears, however, that this was by no means a singular occurrence. Her friends, who could see plainly that Jane Austen was very much the same as other people, and not a person to be in any way afraid of, were so kind as to give her many hints. Here is a sketch found among her papers of the sort of work she ought to have written had she followed their suggestions:—

"Plan of a novel according to hints from various quarters. The names of some of these advisers are written on the margin of the manuscript opposite to their respective suggestions.

"Heroine to be the daughter of a clergyman, who, after having lived much in the world, had retired from it, and settled on a curacy, with a very small portion of his own. The most excellent man that can be imagined; perfect in character, temper, and manner, without the smallest drawback or peculiarity to prevent his being the most delightful companion to his daughter from one year's end to the other. Heroine faultless in character, beautiful in person, and possessing every possible accomplishment. Book to open with father and daughter conversing in long speeches, elegant language, and a tone of high serious sentiment. The father induced, at his daughter's earnest request, to relate to her the past events of his life. Narrative to reach through the greater part of the first volume; as, besides all the circumstances of his attachment to her mother, and their marriage, it will comprehend his going to sea as chaplain to a distinguished naval character about the court, and his going afterwards to court himself, which involved him in many interesting situations, concluding with his opinion of the benefits of tithes being done away with. . . . From this outset the story will proceed, and contain a striking variety of adventures. Father an exemplary parish priest, and devoted to literature, but heroine and father never above a fortnight in one place — he being driven from his curacy by the vile arts of some totally unprincipled and heartless young man, desperately in love with the heroine, and pursuing her with unrelenting passion. No sooner settled in one country of Europe than they are compelled to quit it, and retire to another, always making new acquaintance, and always obliged to leave them. This will of course exhibit a wide variety of character. The scene will be for ever shifting from one set of people to another, but there will be no mixture, — all the good will be unexceptionable in every respect. There will be no foibles or weaknesses but with the wicked, who will be completely depraved and infamous — hardly a resemblance of humanity left in them. Early in her career the heroine must meet with the hero: all perfection, of course, and only prevented from paying his addresses to her by some excess of refinement. Wherever she goes somebody falls in love with her, and she receives

repeated offers of marriage, which she refers wholly to her father, exceedingly angry that *he* should not be the first applied to. Often carried away by the anti-hero, but rescued either by her father or the hero. Often reduced to support herself and her father by her talents, and work for her bread; continually cheated and defrauded of her hire; worn down to a skeleton, and now and then starved to death. At last, hunted out of civilized society, denied the poor shelter of the humblest cottage, they are compelled to retreat into Kamskatcha, where the poor father, quite worn down, finding his end approaching throws himself on the ground, and after four or five hours of tender advice and parental admonition to his miserable child, expires in a fine burst of literary enthusiasm, intermingled with invectives against the holders of tithes. Heroine inconsolable for some time, but afterwards crawls back towards her former country, having at least twenty narrow escapes of falling into the hands of anti-hero; and at last, in the very nick of time, turning a corner to avoid him, runs into the arms of the hero himself, who, having just shaken off the scruples which fettered him before, was at the very moment setting off in pursuit of her. The tenderest and completest *éclaircissement* takes place, and they are happily united. Throughout the whole work heroine to be in the most elegant society, and living in high style."

Miss Mitford's literary fame stands upon a much slighter and less substantial basis than does that of Miss Austen. Indeed it is rather what she herself calls a literary life than any actual work which has made her so well known; and as a literary life, her modest, kindly, long career is remarkable enough. A variety of pleasant sketches—chief among which is her sketch of herself and her flowery cottage—and descriptions of the pretty, luxuriant, leafy landscape, in which all her little pictures are enclosed, are the things which occur to our mind when we meet with her name; yet this pleasant, tranquil *paysagiste* began her life by the tumultuous triumphs of a dramatic author, and had the curious sensation of seeing Covent Garden filled to the doors, "so immense a house that you might have walked over the heads in the pit," to listen to her tragedies. It is a strange episode in the most tranquil of lives. Her first attempt was in a play called "Julian," which we are curtly informed was successful, but which was assailed by a storm of criticism and speedily withdrawn. Her second success she thus describes, with a moderation and calmness which is remarkable after the excitement of such a moment, to her mother. The family were in great straits by this time, caused by Dr. Mitford's folly, and the success or failure of this play meant some-

thing like social life or death. The father and daughter were in town, trembling with a thousand apprehensions, up to the last moment; while the mother, not less anxious, waited in the pretty cottage in the wintry weather for the all-important news. The seriousness of the crisis, and the tender thoughtfulness of the writer, are shown on the very address of this letter. "Mrs. Mitford—*good news*," is written outside, that the very first glance might be reassuring:—

"I cannot suffer this parcel to go to you, my dearest mother, without writing a few lines to tell you of the complete success of my play. It was received, not merely with rapturous applause, but without the slightest symptom of disapprobation from beginning to end. We had not a single order in the house, so that from first to last the approbation was sincere and general. William Harness and Mr. Talfourd are both quite satisfied with the whole affair, and my other friends are half-crazy. Mrs. Trollope, between joy for my triumph and sympathy with the play, has cried herself half blind. I am, and have been, perfectly calm, and am merely tired with the great number of friends whom I have seen to-day. . . . God bless you, my dearest mother! Papa is quite well, and happier than you can imagine. He had really half a mind to go to you instead of writing, so much do both of us wish to share our happiness with you."

"A real impression has been made, and a reputation of the highest order established," she writes a little later to her friend Sir William Elford, complaining, however, playfully, that her second volume of "Our Village," which had just been published, was likely to harm the tragedy, as "people will never allow anybody the power of doing two things well; and because it is admitted that I write playful prose, there be many who assume that I cannot write serious verse." This is so true, that it is difficult even to imagine the comely face of our pleasant village historian growing pale with fright in the stage-box of a vast and crowded theatre, where "the white handkerchiefs are going continually," and the vast audience weeps and thrills with tragic interest. The reader smiles, and feels disposed to doubt the narrative, even when it stands before him in all the integrity of print; for anything less tragic, less solemn, than the sweet-tempered round-about woman, to whom her flowers and her dogs and her village neighbours come so natural, could not be conceived. We do not recognize her in that grand accidental episode of her life, any more than we can sit down to read Foscarini (which all the same is perfectly read-

able). It is only when she is back again among her green lanes, among her geraniums, that we can identify our friend. But with such surroundings we know no English writer who is more supreme in her gentle way. It is not a great way. There is no tragedy here, and such notes of pain as must come into every human strain, are struck so softly, and come so tenderly into the brighter measure, that they sound no harsher than a sigh. But this flowery, leafy, sunny Berks, with its streams and its woods, its cottages and its country-folks, its simple ways and rural quiet, where was there ever any English country more clearly put upon paper? How real and vivid was the impression it made (we remember) upon one little north-country imagination ever so many years ago! The scent of the violets, and the rustle of the great branched trees, and every detail of the landscape came before us as if we had been there — nay, more powerfully than if we had been there, as imagination is always more exquisite than fact. For that intense and well-remembered delight, it is fit that we should render Miss Mitford all the thanks that words can express. It is not perhaps so high an intellectual enjoyment as that which is given, to a mind capable of appreciating them, by Miss Austen's wonderful pictures, yet the recollection is sweeter to the heart.

Nothing could be more unlike the calm existence of the author of "Pride and Prejudice" than the anxious harassed life led by Mary Mitford. The fitful splendour which flickered about her youth had long disappeared. The little family, after various struggles to retain its position, had been driven out of the house which the father and mother had taken such pleasure in building, into a tiny cottage in a village street; and instead of the calm which so many people think — erroneously, in our opinion — to be essential for all mental work, it was among cares of the most depressing kind that Miss Mitford took up as a profession the work which she had fondly dallied with through all her earlier years. "I may in time make something of my poor, poor brains," she cries, pathetically, after her first dramatic failure. "I am now chained to a desk eight, ten, twelve hours a-day at mere drudgery. All my thoughts of writing are for hard money. All my correspondence is on hard business. Oh, pity me! pity me! My very mind is sinking under the fatigue and anxiety. . . . My dear father," she adds at a later period, with that pitiful endurance of the meanness of the men belonging to them; and anxious endeavours to give it the best possible aspect to the world, which some

women are obliged to bear, "relying with a blessed sanguineness on my poor endeavours, has not, I believe, even inquired for a situation; and I do not press the matter, though I anxiously wish it, being willing to give one more trial to the theatre. If I could but get the assurance of earning for my dear father and mother a humble competence, I should be the happiest creature in the world. But for these dear ties I should never write another line, but go out in some situation as other destitute women do." This was her encouragement, poor soul, in undertaking what she calls "the boldest attempt ever made by woman" — a grand historical tragedy on the subject of Charles I. and Cromwell, a work which, after costing her infinite pains, was considered dangerous by the Lord Chamberlain, who refused his licence for its representation. She was at this time some years over thirty, at the height of a woman's powers, but not at the height of her hopes; for by that time life has begun to drag a little with the solitary. The only thing which mitigates our indignation against the father who, with "blessed sanguineness," could thus put himself upon his child's shoulders to be supported is, that he and the tenderer, sweeter mother filled her life at least with domestic happiness. "I hope," she adds, with quick compunction after the plaint we have just quoted, "there is no want of duty in my wishing him to contribute his efforts with mine to our support."

He was her first object all her life; and it is only by such a faint implied reproof as the above that she ever betrays to the outside world any sense of his sins against her. But her love for him was that of a mother rather than a daughter — an anxious, protecting, not unsuspicious affection. She writes to him with expressions of fondness which sound exaggerated, though they are apparently natural to her — but always with a latent sense that he is naughty, and that there will be various matters to forgive and forget when he comes back from his roving. A strange picture! One can see the two women at home in their anxious consultations — the mother and daughter, who think there is nobody like him in the world, and yet lay their kind heads together and wonder what he may be about — how he may be squandering their substance, what new burdens he may bring back to be made the best of. Yet what a handsome, fine, white-haired gentleman — a father to be proud of — does he appear in "Our Village," half seen in the sanctuary of his study, a magistrate and authority! Such a half-conscious, dear deception is common

enough among women whom the world thinks comfortably blind to all their idol's defects, not knowing, like a stupid world as it is, that it is their very keenness of sight which produces that mist of tender illusion thus hung up and held up to dazzle other eyes.

The success of the tragedies seems to have been a fitful and not very profitable kind of success; but "Our Village" went into fourteen editions in the course of a few years, and a fluctuating unsteady sort of prosperity visited the cottage. They set up a pony and chaise, and by times were in good spirits; but it does not seem that Miss Mitford was ever fully reconciled to that stern necessity of labour, which to some people in this world is so great a grievance, and to some so great a blessing. She had been brought up in wealth and ease, for one thing, and had the feeling upon her, however concealed, that the money which ought to have maintained herself and her family had been squandered. Besides, she was one of the Northumberland Mitfords, allied to very great people indeed; and though there is no appearance of any contempt for her craft or its professors naturally arising in her own mind, it must have been a little hard to struggle against her father's feelings on the subject — feelings which remind us of one or two of Mr. Dickens's characters, — of the dignified Mr. Turveydrop and of Mr. Bray in "Nicholas Nickleby." "My father," she writes, "very kind to me in many respects, very attentive if I'm ill, very solicitous that my garden should be nicely kept, that I should go out with him and be amused, is yet, so far as art, literature, and the drama are concerned, of a temper infinitely difficult to deal with. He hates and despises them and all their professors, looks on them with hatred and scorn, and is constantly taunting me with 'my friends' and 'my people,' as he calls them, reproaching me if I hold the slightest intercourse with either editor, artist, or actor, and treating with frank contempt every one not of a certain station in the county. . . . He ought to remember," pleads the poor authoress, not without a certain feeling of caste in her own person, and not sure that, after all, he may be right and she is demeaning herself, "that it is not for my own pleasure, but from a sense of duty, that I have been thrown in the way of such persons; and he should allow for the natural sympathy of similar pursuits, and the natural wish to do the little that one so poor and so powerless can do to bring merit, and that of a very high order, into notice. It is one of the

few alleviations of a destiny that is wearing down my health and mind and spirits and strength — a life spent in efforts beyond my powers, and which will end in the work-house or in Bedlam as the body or mind shall sink first. He ought to feel this, but he does not."

There are many of these melancholy half-complaints in the latter part of her, or rather of her father's, life. Her destiny hangs very heavily upon her. She was not born, she feels, for such a fate; neither, she thinks, with natural generalizing, was any woman ever intended to support a family — forgetting, as was also quite natural, how many women do. She goes over a little list of literary women, in her sad moments, to prove this unsatisfactory theory. Mrs. Hofland is ill, Mrs. Hall is ill, Miss Landon dead, and so on through a melancholy catalogue. As the master of the house grew older and more infirm, life grew ever harder and harder in the cottage at Three Mile Cross. He who had never been considerate became exacting, and in his demands upon her for personal tendance, forgot that she had to be the breadwinner as well as the nurse; while she, poor soul, worn to death with long hours of reading to him, nursing him, watching his every want, felt guilty and wretched to the bottom of her heart that she could not at the same time work for him, and carry on a double labour. For his sake she had given up a prospect opened to her by the kindness of some distant relatives, who proposed to her to live with them and be their companion — "not a dependant, but a daughter." They were people whom she liked and trusted, and the arrangement would have given her immediate ease and some permanent provision; but she gives it up with a sigh, in consideration of her father's comfort. "To have left him *here* would have been impossible," she says; "and if Mr. Ragget had (as I believe he would) given him a home at Odiham, the sacrifice of his old habits, his old friends, the blameless self-importance which results from his station as chairman of the Reading Bench, and his really influential position in the county, where we are much respected in spite of our poverty, would have been far too much to ask or to permit." This possibility, accordingly, was given up; but as the weary years stole on, and the old man, whose comforts must not be infringed whatever happened, descended lower and lower into that feebleness of age in which even the generous and amiable become exacting without knowing it, heavier and heavier clouds stole over the devoted daughter,

and her weariness — or perhaps the fact that her life by this time was cheered by female friends to whom she could utter her heart more freely — forces her into speech. "After all, a wretched life is mine," she cries in her despair. "Health is gone; and if I can but last while my dear father requires me — if the little money we have can but last — then it would matter little how soon I too were released. . . . My life is only valuable, as being useful to him." And then come heartrending letters to the faithful friend, Mr. Harness, who lived to plan and partially edit these volumes, but who is dead since their publication. He was her trustee, and held in his hands the last remnant of her mother's fortune, and not very long before it had been necessary for her to write him a sharp, brief note, strangely concentrated in its pain and shame, begging him to receive no applications for any part of this money except such as came from *herself*. But when the last stage of this long struggle comes, the poor soul, who can see no future beyond her father's death, and cares for no provision, nor anticipates any want of one after that event, changes her tone; and she writes to him as follows, with a piteous pleading and remorseful self-accusation which goes to the reader's heart: —

"I have to entreat of you that you will suffer so much money as may be necessary to pay our debts to be taken from that in Mr. Blandy's hands — say the two hundred pounds lately paid in. The necessity for this has arisen, partly from the infamous conduct of Messrs. Finden, but chiefly from my dear father's state of health and spirits, which has made me little better than a nurse; and lastly, from my own want of strength, which has prevented my exerting myself as I ought to have done to remedy these disappointments. Nobody, to see me, would believe the wretched state of my health. Could you know all I have to undergo and suffer, you would rather wonder that I am alive, than that (joined to all I have to do with my dear father — reading to him, waiting upon him, playing at cribbage with him, and bearing, *alone*, the depression of a man once so strong and so active, and now so feeble) — you would rather wonder that I have lived through this winter, than that I have failed to provide the means of support for our little household.

"I am, however, rather better now, and feel that, if relieved from this debt, which weighs me down, I shall (as I have told my dear father that I must) rather seem to neglect him in the minor points of reading to him, &c., than again fail in working at my desk. Be assured that if you allow me to go to my writing with a clear mind, I shall not again be found wanting. It has been all my fault now, and if that fault be visited upon my father's white head, and he be

sent to jail for my omissions, I should certainly not long remain to grieve over my sin, for such it is. It is a great trial, for my father has never for the last four years, been two months without some attack of immediate danger, and the nursing and attending him are in themselves almost more than can be done by a person whose own state of health involves constant attention, and leaves her well-nigh exhausted and unnerved in mind and body. But I see now that a portion of the more fatiguing part of this attendance (say the reading aloud) must be relinquished, and however grievous, it *shall* be so, for the more stringent duty of earning our daily bread. I will do this, and you, I am sure, will enable me to go with a free mind to my task. I am sure that you will do so. It would be a most false and mistaken friendship for me which should induce you to hesitate, for my very heart would be broken if aught should befall his grey hairs.

"My dear father has, years ago, been improvident; he still is irritable and difficult to live with; but he is a person of a thousand virtues — honest, faithful, just, and true, and kind. There are very, very few half so good in this mixed world. It is my fault that this money is needed — entirely my fault; and, if it be withheld, I am well assured of the consequences to both: law proceedings will be commenced; my dear father will be overthrown mind and body, and I shall never know another happy hour. I feel after this that you will not refuse me the kindness that I ask."

This letter, dated in July 1841, was followed in about six months by another in a similar strain: —

"I sit down with inexpressible reluctance to write to you, my ever dear and kind friend, because I well know that you will blame me for the occasion; but it must be said, and I can only entreat your indulgence and your sympathy. My poor father has passed this winter in a miserable state of health and spirits. His eyesight fails him now so completely that he cannot even read the leading articles in the newspapers. Accordingly, I have not only every day gone through the daily paper, debates and all, which forms a sort of necessity to one who has so long taken an interest in everything that passes, but, after that, I have read to him from dark till bedtime, and then have often (generally) sat at his bedside almost till morning, sometimes reading, sometimes answering letters as he slept, expecting the terrible attacks of cramp, three or four of a night, during which he gets out of bed to walk the room, unable to get in again without my assistance. I have been left no time for composition — neither time nor heart — so that we have spent money without earning any.

"What I have to ask of you, then, is to authorize Mr. Blandy to withdraw sufficient money to set us clear with the world, with a few pounds to start with, and then I *must* prefer the greater duty to the less. I must so far neglect my dear

father as to gain time for writing what may support us. The season is coming on when he will be able to sit in the garden, and perhaps to see a few friends of an afternoon, and then this incessant reading will be less necessary to him. At all events, the thing must be done, and shall. It was a great weakness in me, a self-indulgence, not to do so before, for the fault is entirely mine. I believe, when these debts are paid, his own spirits will lose that terrible depression, broken only by excessive irritability, which has rendered this winter a scene of misery to himself and a trial to me.

"Do not fancy, my dear friend, that I cast the slightest blame on my dear father. The dejection and the violence belong to disease fully as much as any other symptom. If anybody be to blame, I am the person, for not having taken care that he should have no anxiety — nothing but age and infirmity — to bear. God forgive me for my want of energy! for suffering myself to be wholly engrossed by the easier duty of reading to him! I will not do so again. Once a week he goes into Reading to the bench, and then he rallies, and nobody seeing him then could imagine what the trial is at home; and with nobody but myself, it has been some excuse for getting through the day and the night as best I could; but it shall be so no longer.

"Heaven bless you! do not refuse me this most urgent prayer, and do not think worse of me than you can help."

When the life of this man, who for so many years has been the tyrant and intolerable burden of his daughter's existence, comes to an end, the reader is disposed to turn away impatiently from her sorrow, and to feel a certain impulse of contradiction when among her tears she assures her friends that he must be happy, and that never a man had more humble reason to anticipate heaven. If a man may be so selfish, so cruel, so devoid of natural justice or compassion, and yet be sure of adoring love all his life and heaven at the end, what meaning is there in the distinction between right and wrong? we ask ourselves. To Mr. Harness, at least, there must have been a fierce and fine satisfaction in thus at last revealing to the world what manner of man he really was whom Mary Mitford made an idol of, and of whom she has left so many fond pictures that we, deceived, might have admired him too. When he was gone she was very sad, as may be supposed: but gradually recovered out of her sadness and took comfort in her friends, and found at last after the long struggles of life, a peaceful evening, no longer worn with overwork, or filled with petty anxieties. The book called "*Recollections of a Literary Life*," which is not, so to speak, a book at all, but only a collection of her favourite scraps of poetry, from Percy's ballads down to sundry

contemporary poets whom few people, we daresay, ever heard of, was put together in this time of rest. The book is a kind of an imposition to be given to the world under such a title, it must be allowed, but it is full of the most tender, charming little bits of autobiography and a certain serene sabbatical calm. She tells us how she goes out "almost daily" to "the charming green lane — the grassy, turfy, shady lane of which I have before made mention," attended by her little dog Fanchon, and her favourite little maid, with her books and writing-case. There on "a certain green hillock, under down-hanging elms, . . . where we have partly found, partly scraped out for ourselves, a turfy seat and turfy table redolent of wild thyme, and a thousand fairy flowers, delicious in its coolness, its fragrance, and its repose," the genial, tender old woman placed herself, undisturbed, as it was meet she should be, by any care or trouble, taking the full enjoyment of the country so dear to her, and of the summer skies and summer air, and all the greenness that she loved; with her favourite poets by her side, and the pen which she had no longer any need to ply as a drudge, and which she loved too, dearly, when she ceased to be its vassal. This last picture, drawn by her own hand, is the most pleasant conclusion that could be put to the much-troubled, much-toiling life. New ties she was too old to form, and there was no child to love her as she had loved; but yet in a serene quiet, as of the evening, glad of the ease, and the stillness, and the dews; glad too, perhaps, that all was so near over, and night at hand, and sleep — the weary soul rests and muses and smiles upon the world which has not given her much, and yet is full of friends to her. After some fifteen years of this soft, cheerful solitude, she died, sixty-six years old, without further pang or grief, with kind people about her, and servants who loved her; but with everything that had been her very own gone before her into the other world.

We do not attempt to make any comparison between these two lives, nor are the two minds to be compared. Miss Austen was by much the greater artist, but the sweetness of the atmosphere about her humble contemporary was far above anything possible to the great novelist. In presence of the one we admire and wonder, watching the perfect work that by means so insignificant grows under her hands; while with the other we do little more than breathe the fresh air and the flowers, and identify one little spot of actual soil not created, but described. Yet the two figures

thus accidentally placed together — unlike in mind and in fortune, yet so like in some points of fact — cast a certain light upon each other, standing up each under “the little span of sky and little lot of stars” that belongs to her by nature; women false to no instinct of womankind, as modest, as gentle, as little obtrusive as the humblest housewife. Let us hope that their portraits thus simultaneously reproduced may do

something towards restoring the ancient standard which journalists tell us is so much altered in these days; or may at least show that the possibility of work for women is not a thing of to-day, but had been found, and well done, with little fuss but tolerable success, before any of the present agitators of that much-discussed subject were born to throw light upon an ignorant world.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING IN HEAVEN.

“From youthful hours we two together
Have lived for fifty years —
Through summer days, through winter weather,
Through sunshine and through tears.

Now watching thy sick couch beside,
Still beautiful to me,
I trust whatever may betide
We shall not parted be.

O God, if death be come for her,
Let my strong pray’r be heard:
Leave me not here a prisoner
On earth, with hope deferred.

Grant, while her angel wings are spreading,
I be not left alone;
But let us keep our golden wedding
Before thy golden throne!”

* * * * *
Fulfilment to the prayer was given —
In quiet death they lay,
And celebrated in high heaven
Their fiftieth wedding-day.

Tinsley’s Magazine.

A NEW HAMPSHIRE JUDGE OF THE OLDEN TIME. — John Dudley of Raymond, N. H., who was a Judge in that State from 1785 to 1809, was a remarkable man. Having no legal education whatever, and but little learning of any kind, yet he possessed a discriminating mind, a retentive memory, a patience which no labor could tire, and integrity proof alike against threats and flattery. He was, says the *Exeter News Letter*, a resolute, strong-minded man, intent on doing substantial justice in every case, though often indifferent to the forms and requirements of law. He was withal, very heedless of grammar, but never failed to make

himself understood. “You may laugh,” said the late Judge Theophilus Parsons, “at his law, and ridicule his language, but Dudley is, after all, the best Judge I ever knew in New Hampshire.” A specimen of his style has been preserved in the following conclusion of one of his charges to the jury, grammatical peculiarities excepted: —

“You have heard, gentlemen of the jury, what has been said in this case by the lawyers, the rascals; but no, I will not abuse them. It is their business to make a good case for their clients; they are paid for it; and they have done in this case well enough. But you and I, gentlemen of the jury, have something else to consider. They talk of law. Why, gentlemen, it is not law we want, but justice. They would govern us by the common law of England. Trust me, gentlemen, common sense is a much better guide for us — the common sense of Raymond, Epping, Exeter and the other towns which have sent us here to try this case between two of our neighbors. A clear head and an honest heart are worth more than all the lawyers.

“There was one good thing said at the bar. It was from Shakspeare, an English player, I believe. No matter: it is good enough almost to be in the Bible. It is this: ‘Be just and fear not.’ That, gentlemen, is the law in this case, and law enough in any case. ‘Be just and fear not.’ It is our business to do justice between the parties, not by any quirks of the law out of Coke or Blackstone, books that I never read, and never will; but by common sense and common honesty as between man and man. That is our business, and the curse of God is upon us if we neglect, or evade, or turn aside from it.

“And now, Mr. Sheriff, take out the jury; and you, Mr. Foreman, do not keep us waiting with idle talk, of which there has been too much already, about matters which have nothing to do with the merits of the case. Give us an honest verdict, of which, as plain, common sense men, you need not be ashamed.”

Boston Journal.

From The Contemporary Review.
ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.*

BY THE REV. JOHN DOWDEN.

THE greater part of the contents of the first of these volumes was already known to a limited circle of readers through a collection of "Letters and Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough," printed, but not published, in 1865. There is no one, who has had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with that interesting volume, that will not be pleased to learn that it is now given to the public, together with some additional letters, and several short works in prose, consisting of lectures, essays and reviews. In the second volume we have the poems already known, and, together with some smaller and less important pieces, now published for the first time in its completeness, what we cannot but regard as the most remarkable of all the writings of Clough—the unfinished poem entitled "Dipsychus."

The whole range of our literature shows no poet whose writings so fully and faithfully represent the man as those of Clough. We know none who so freely and entirely gives us himself. There is not one of his poems in which we do not find the personal outcome of his nature. His songs he sings out of his own heart. To give expression to his own thoughts and feelings was the *motive* of his music. No doubt his deep and genuine feeling for all that was human, and his marvellous power of analysis, could not fail to make him capable of entering into the characters of others. The portraits of the Trevellins (though sketchy, and meant to be no more), of Hobbes, of Elspie, of "the grave man nicknamed Adam," are all true and forcible; while, of the voyagers in *Mari Magno*, the lawyer, and "the rural dean," are as perfect in their way as any of the Canterbury pilgrims. Yet in none is there that complete reticence of self which is demanded by the best descriptive, as well as the best dramatic, poetry. In every character there is something of Clough himself. We find among his verses few or no "dramatic lyrics,"† little of the working

of the historical imagination, that delights to place itself in other conditions, and to speak with other tongues. Even in the poems cast in a quasi-dramatic mould,—"The Mystery of the Fall" and "Dipsychus,"—it is, for the most part, Clough who, in varying moods, utters himself by turns through the mouths of each of the interlocutors. It is not merely form and colour, but material and substance, that are supplied from within. Hence the study of his poems is the study of Clough himself. And this characteristic of his poetry gives to it, without question, in these days of much introspection and psychological analyzing, one of its most powerful attractions.

An attempt to understand any man is an attempt to reduce to a single harmonious whole the multiform phases of his character. And in this attempt, when the lie of the main central lines of force has been once clearly perceived, it is generally not difficult to group around them, in their just proportions, the many minor details which examination presents to our notice. The relations and subordinations of parts are quickly learned when we have gained the key-note which rules the whole. All modulations, all chromatic varieties, are given place and assume meaning when our ears are filled with the fundamental tones of the central scale, in which God has written the great symphony of any noble human life. In the case of Clough this task is not an easy one. The difficulty lies in finding the great dominant principle. Modern literature presents to us no other life which exhibits in a manner so striking an elemental war almost unceasingly carried on. Impulse and prudence struggle for ever; reason contends against passion, passion against reason; the flesh striveth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. Each faculty is suspicious of its fellows; the instincts of the heart doubt the intellect; the intellect doubts the instincts. "Instinct turns instinct out, and thought wheels round on thought." The emotions, however simple and spontaneous, are perpetually subjected to painful analyses, which leave the chemist of the soul, at the close of his experimentation, still doubtful of his results.

As illustrative of the above statements, in questions of religion, which much occupied Clough, we find that his mind included within it two types, to be found at the opposite poles of character—the emotional and the intellectual—the believing and the critical—the trustful, that finds a warrant in itself, and the disposition that will try all things. He understood, but struggled against, the temper of mind that could express itself in

* The Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough, with a Selection from his Letters and a Memoir. Edited by his Wife. 2 vols. London: Macmillan & Co. 1869.

† The poems "Jacob," "The Song of Lamech," and especially the very beautiful verses, "Jacob's Wives," come nearest to making exceptions to what is here stated; but though exhibiting sufficiently clearly with what power Clough might have wrought the vein of the "dramatic lyric," had he directed his attention to it, yet these poems are free from any aim at studied literary antiquarianism (such as Mr. Browning and his imitators have made us so familiar with), and do not hesitate to suggest thoughts and feelings modern in their character and partaking of the flavour of the poet's mind.

S. T. Coleridge's phrase, "Evidences of Christianity! I am weary of the word. Make a man feel the want of it . . . and you may safely trust it to its own evidence." But Clough thought it possible that one might be a mere "slave to spiritual appetites, affections, and wants,"—holding, apparently, that an instinct may create an intellectual object for itself; yet, at the same time, not giving sufficient weight to the truth that, despite all perversions, it is a substantive argument that our hearts *do* yearn towards One greater than ourselves, that our hands are stretched out in the dark and feel after Him, if haply they might find Him. "Moral honesty" without "intellectual honesty" was, with Clough, but a vain thing. He had been plunged, while yet only a boy, into the midst of the agitation of the Tractarian movement at Oxford. There he had seen men's "moral honesty" inducing them to cut asunder the ties of old friendships and old associations, and to abandon, for the sake of what they held true, the possession or prospect of wealth and position. But, also, he had seen them accept as truth, through the want, as he thought, of that other honesty, the whole circle of mediæval fables and monkish miracles. At school the contact of Dr. Arnold's mind—as was to be expected—exerted a remarkable power over Clough. His natural conscientiousness, sense of responsibility, and courageous love of truth made him keenly appreciative of the kindred qualities in the mind of Arnold, and were themselves at the same time deepened and intensified. Archbishop Whately used frequently to assert of himself (though we question the justice of the assertion) that he possessed no *influence* over other men—meaning by the word the power which one mind possesses over another, and by which it sways it independently of, and apart from, the amount of felt love, fear, or respect, and beyond what can be referred to reason, regard for interest, or any intelligible motive. Clough came successively under the influence, in this sense of the word, of two of the most powerful of such magnetic or mesmeric minds—first in Arnold, of Rugby, and afterwards in John Henry Newman. The latter was at the full height of his power at Oxford when Clough came into residence; and it is quite apparent that for awhile Clough was deeply sensible of his marvellous attraction.* But

Clough's was not a mind to allow itself to drift long down any current without questioning whence and whither it was flowing. At no time, indeed, so far as we can find from his letters or other writings, did he accept any of the distinctive theological dogmas of the Romanizing party; but certainly, before many months, the circumstances by which he was surrounded forced upon him a thorough examination of his religious belief; and, whether in the spirit of reaction or not, he subjected the whole structure of his creed, by way of test, to a treatment so violent as to shake it to its lowest foundation.

During his early college days Clough was brought much into contact with Mr. Ward, whose name is so closely associated with the Tractarian movement, and who afterwards, like Dr. Newman, seceded to the ranks of the Church of Rome. Mr. Ward writes of Clough:—

"What was before all things to have been desired for him was that during his undergraduate career he should have given himself up thoroughly to his classical and mathematical studies, and kept himself from plunging prematurely into the theological controversies then so rife at Oxford. Thus he would have been saved from all injury to the gradual and healthy growth of his mind and character. It is my own very strong impression that, had this been permitted, his future course of thought and speculation would have been essentially different from what it was in fact. Drawn, as it were peremptorily, when a young man just come up to college, into a decision upon questions the most important that can occupy the mind, the result was not surprising."

In these remarks there can be no doubt that there is much justice; but we cannot be persuaded that the radical constitution of Clough's mind was such as under any circumstances to admit of an easy acceptance of untried truths. His scepticism was not confined to religion; it was a fundamental habit of his mind. It appears in his beliefs on political and social questions; it enters into his treatment of even the nearest and most personal feelings of his heart. If ever there was a man who fully felt what it was to be beset behind and before by the snares of self-delusion, Clough was that man. Was it friendship, or love, or politics, or religion that occupied him? There was first felt the prompt impulse—the bidding of the instinct; then the doubt and the examination in which impulse and instinct were sifted; then the doubt of the doubt, and the hesitancy in decision. Again, Clough's scepticism (using the word in its wide sense), however much it was affected by the

* Yet, in estimating the force of the impressions made upon Clough at this period of his life, it is worth observing that there is scarcely a verse of his poems in which the influence of either "Lyra Apostolica" or "The Christian Year" is directly traceable.

general current of the thought of our time, has a note which we recognize as quite peculiar to itself. If we are right in our analysis, it is at least partly due to this — that his scepticism had no proclivity, derived from feelings or wishes, towards unbelief. The desire was to believe, the wish was to hold fast all that showed itself at the first beautiful, generous, and holy. He dreaded the pain of the consequences to which he foresaw his examination might lead him, but he dreaded yet more the pain of being untrue to himself. He had no enjoyment in mere destructive criticism for its own sake. "It is no new gospel," he says, "to tell us that the old one is of dubious authenticity." And he was as entirely out of sympathy with the self-contented believers in the speedily approaching culmination of all perfection in nineteenth-century civilization and the working out of our present social theories, as with those traditionalists who are the opponents of all progress: —

"Old things need not be therefore true,
O brother men, nor yet the new."

This is the burden of many a song of his. If this incomplete present afford but inadequate grounds for a satisfying faith, it is not the part of the "adult spirit" to try to force itself to regard them as adequate; no —

"Receive it not, but leave it not,
And wait it out, O Man!"

The revolutionary movement that agitated Europe in the years '48 and '49 was watched by Clough with deep interest, and, at first, with much hopefulness. But no man took a shorter time to learn from experience. He had spent part of the spring and summer of 1848 in Paris, and had seen the beginnings of the brief-lived Republic. The next year he writes in one of his letters: —

"I am not so clear as you are of the rottenness of this poor old ship here [in England]. Something, I think, we rash young men may learn from the failure and discomfiture of our friends in the new republic. The millennium, as Matt. [Mr. Matthew Arnold] says, won't come this bout. I am myself much more inclined to be patient and make allowance for existing necessities than I was. The very fighting of the time taught one that there were worse things than pain, and makes me more tolerant of the less acute though more chronic miseries of society. These also are stages towards good, or conditions of good. Whether London will take my hopefulness out of me remains to be seen. *Peut-être.*"

In the year 1849, during a journey in Italy, he happened to be at Rome when it

was besieged by the French. But though sympathizing with the Roman people in their struggle, his eagerness was plainly checked by something of scepticism as to the issues at the best. "Quid Romæ faciam?" he writes. "What's politics to he, or he to politics?" And again, two months later, "I am full of admiration of Mazzini. But, on the whole, Farewell politics utterly! What can I do? Study is more to the purpose." Still, while losing something of his early hopefulness, to the end his feelings went with all liberal movements in politics. Nor did his residence in the United States of America change his convictions. On his return to London in 1853 he writes to his New England friend, Mr. Charles Eliot Norton: —

"Really, I may say I am only just beginning to recover my spirits after returning from the young, and hopeful, and humane republic to this cruel, unbelieving, inveterate old monarchy. There are deeper waters of ancient knowledge and experience about one here, and one is saved from the temptation of flying off into space; but I think you have, beyond all question, the happiest and best country going. Still the political talk of America, such as one hears it here, is not always true to the best intention of the country — is it?"

It would be impossible in this paper to enter into a detailed examination of the religious opinions of Clough. It must suffice to say in a general way that his refusal to accept the Christian creed seems to proceed rather from a deep sense of the extremely doubtful character of the evidences, than from the results of an actual examination of them with a view to establish how far the admitted doubtfulness of the proofs, together with the admitted weakness of human powers, is sufficient to determine that the alleged facts on which Christianity is built are not historically credible.

"Manuscripts are doubtful," he says, "records may be unauthentic, criticism is feeble, historical facts must be left uncertain. Even in like manner my own personal experience is most limited, perhaps even most delusive. What have I seen? what do I know? Nor is my personal judgment a thing I feel any great satisfaction in trusting. My reasoning powers are weak, my memory doubtful and confused, my conscience it may be callous or vitiated."

While all this may be true, we must not assume that the weighing of evidence and balancing of probabilities may not afford a substantial basis for faith. In an argument with which Clough was familiar, and whose cogency he acknowledges, Butler had taught this long before. How the historical claims of Christianity were brought before the

mind of Clough, or how they were examined by him, we are not able to say. But as he seems to have been unable to perceive any connection between the truth of the alleged facts and the spiritual result which he found in "the religious tradition" of Christendom, we are led, not unnaturally, to question the searching character of an investigation which appeared to him to have had no practical object.*

It is with a feeling of mingled disgust and indignation that we observe the off-hand manner in which it is so often assumed in the pulpit, in popular religious books, and even in theological works, where greater caution might be expected, that any unreadiness to accept the evidence which may happen to be offered in support of the doctrines of the Catholic creeds must of necessity be due to some desire after evil, or some obliquity of moral vision, or some "pride of intellect," or some perversity

of will, or, in fine, some judicially-inflicted blindness. Assumptions like these, applied with a sweeping generality, are wanting as much in the warrant of sound reason as in the hopefulness of Christian charity. There can, indeed, be no student of human nature who does not perceive the sufficiently obvious fact of the disturbing influence of the affections upon the judgment. But it is impossible to infer the ethical character of the emotion when once we have discovered that eagerness of desire in some persons produces results entirely similar to dread or dislike in others. With such, the thing they hope for is "too good to be true."

Again, in questions that do not show themselves to be practical nor demand an immediate answer, it is not always possible to give a complete assent of the mind, even in the case of a clear preponderance of probabilities. In the sense intended by Butler, "religion is a practical thing," and "probability is the very guide of life." But more than the regulation of our course of conduct is included within religion. And though actions do not look further back than the dictate of the will (which was determined by general considerations weighing in this or that direction), the affections are in no direct subjection to the will, and their outflow cannot fail to be restrained or impeded by any least shade of doubt as to the hypothetical character of their objects. And surely, on the whole, it is at least not too much to say that faultiness or inexactness in the presentation of the evidence, or intellectual idiosyncrasy, or both together, may in some cases sufficiently account for results which we deplore, while we are unwilling to attribute them to moral perversity.

No one can peruse the biography before us untouched by the noble glow of earnestness that pervaded the entire life of Clough. His was no life of dreamy inaction, toying, *diletante*-like, with the luxury of doubt. Not by a single act only, but by the labours of his whole brief life, he vindicates for himself the character of one who was not a hearer merely, but a doer of the word that God spake to his heart. We learn in the memoir how the resignation of his fellowship at Oriel was in his case a sacrifice peculiarly trying. Yet there is no ado about the matter, no exhibition of puling sentiment, no eagerness for sympathy, no seeking for condolence, and no condoling with himself. The same manly cheerfulness in the performance of duty, the same adult self-containedness, are characteristic of him in every circumstance of his life. In all the subtly-woven intricacies of the heart's doubts and

* We do not regret that it has been thought well to publish in the present volumes the review of F. W. Newman's "The Soul," and the Notes on Religious Tradition. Of a mind like Clough's it is well to know all that is to be known. But it is with pain that we find him so very much farther removed from us than we had fancied. One word may be said in reference to some of the opinions expressed in the first of these articles. We cannot feel sure, according to Clough, that the devotional attitude of the soul brings us into contact with any order of real existences, and that at least, whether it does or not, devotional practices unfit us for our *ergon* here—the actual work of life. He does not, we need hardly add, consider in any way the question of those results of prayer which are not the results of the self-posturing of the soul, and to which the name *supernatural* would be attached by most persons. But apart from this consideration—the results merely subjective in their origin we cannot think have been truly described. For example—the experience of many will substantiate the truth that prayer may be, not a kind of letting off of spiritual force, but a gaining of force; not an outbursting of emotion without result, but an ingathering of strength, a concentrating of scattered powers into a self-possession. It is no small thing, surely, to have intensified "the earnest desire to do good," though the way to do it yet remains obscure. On the extravagances against which Clough is indignant we have nothing to say, but we feel it is unfair that the picture of devout and religious persons in general should be drawn from such as consult a random text in a chance-opened Bible, or the augury from the "head or tail of a providential sixpence." Yet Clough recognizes "the mysterious instinct of prayer" as a fact in the natural history of man, and will not class "this delicate exhalation of man's inmost humanity" in any list of "gases, mephitic or otherwise;" and in one characteristic poem he even ventures to say—

"It may be true
That while we walk the troublous tossing sea

There are who walk beside us; and the cry
That rises so spontaneous to the lips,
The "Help us or we perish" is not nought
An evanescent spectrum of disease—
It may be that indeed, and not in fancy,
A hand that is not ours upstays our steps,
A voice that is not ours commands the waves:
At any rate,
That there are beings above us, I believe,
And when we lift up holy hands in prayer,
I will not say they will not give us aid."

desires the sense of duty never failed to find the clue. Neither the *Acta Sanctorum*, nor the records of the uncanonized in modern religious biography, can furnish many lives more full of noble stimulant, and more truly Christian in loftiness and simplicity of motive, sweet purity of life, and zeal for all that was holy, just, and good.

The sceptical spirit which we have noticed in Clough's way of dealing with religious questions pervades every region of thought. He seems, indeed, sometimes (we should be disposed to say in languid intervals coming rarely) ready to accept the doctrine, "Wen Gott betrügt, ist wohl betrogen." "People should not be very sceptical about things in general," he thought at times. And it was surely with some consciousness of his own tendencies — weakness or strength as we may judge them — that he wrote —

"There is something certainly of an over-educated weakness of purpose in Western Europe — not in Germany only, or France, but also in more busy England. There is a disposition to press too far the finer and subtler intellectual and moral susceptibilities; to insist upon following out, as they say, to their logical consequences the notices of some single organ of their spiritual nature; a proceeding which is hardly more sensible in the grown man than it would be in the infant to refuse to correct the sensations of sight by those of touch. Upon the whole, we are disposed to follow out, if we must follow out at all, the analogy of the bodily senses; we are inclined to accept rather than investigate, and to put our confidence less in arithmetic and antinomies than in

'A few strong instincts and a few plain rules.'"

Yet certainly what is here commended was far removed from the prevailing habit of his own mind. What instinct, however strong, would he accept without a question? His mind, in its state of vigorous and normal energy, will put everything to the test. He is sure that to be deluded — even by God — is unworthy of a man. He will try all things — if religion — if the theopathic emotions — why not all human loves? And the many problems which the human affections present, he investigates with a rigid analysis in the "Bothie," some of the tales of "Mari Magno," and especially in "Amours de Voyage." He dissects slowly and carefully, and down to the bone, and does not pause because of the ugly sights that may be disclosed by his scalpel. What is love? Is it a fruit of mystical affinities of which poets sing? Or a fruit of mere "juxtaposition?" Or yet of affinities potent and efficient "by the favour of juxtaposition?" Or how much is due to *natura naturans*

through the lichen, the primrose, the slow crustacea, the gilded snake, the dolphin, the leopard:—

"The Power, which e'en in stones and earths
By blind elections felt, in forms
Organic breeds to myriad births?"

And how may he who loves dare believe that the future will be always as the present,* or that even now in the shock and convulsion of passion, he carries inextinguished and undimmed the light of his knowledge, and that he sees things as they are? And what, again, if we, in these doubts as to the permanence of the absorbing character of love, should not be asking too much? That feeling gives colour to thought, he knows, and for this he will make allowance; he, at least, come what may, will be truthful to himself. The intellectual element of Clough's nature was eventually dominant in all divided counsels, and was the ultimate arbiter in all the casuistries of the heart. But there can be no greater mistake than to fail to recognize the vigour and strength of his feelings. Thoughtless readers, contrasting him with poets who delight to exhibit their passion uncontrolled, will be sure to underrate the power and depth of the emotion which at times we see tiding up and filling to the full every reach of his heart. Clough's is essentially a *strong* character, but strong with the strength of two contending lines of force, limiting and counteracting one another. He feels strongly, but he *knows* as well as feels. And his powerful mind never for a moment loses its grasp of intellectual convictions. One of the highest triumphs of his skill is the manner, exquisitely truthful, in which he portrays the strong strugglings of the heart as circumscribed and restrained by the bonds of

* In one of the most charming lyrics in our language, after singing —

"That out of sight is out of mind
Is true of most we leave behind;
It is not sure, nor can be true,
My own and only love, of you," —

and then showing how naturally and rightly

"Men, that will not idlers be,
Must lend their hearts to things they see," —

he concludes,

"But love, the poets say, is blind;
So out of sight and out of mind
Need not, nor will, I think, be true,
My own and only love, of you."

Observe the "nor will, I think" (!) — so thoroughly characteristic. What Clough writes of Thackeray may, it seems to us, be applied with slight modification to himself. "Thackeray doesn't sneer: he is really very sentimental; but he sees the silliness sentiment runs into, and so always tempers it by a little banter or ridicule." He adds, "He is much farther into actual life than I am; I always feel that, but one can't be two things at once you know."

mental foresight. It may seem, indeed, a ruthless thing when the whole soul is moving onward, under the force of a simple and beautiful impulse, to take young love and scrutinize it, and look close into its face. And Clough felt the sacredness of all noble feelings, but truth too was sacred for him.*

At this point in our criticism we may notice the fact, that no poet of this century who can justly claim so high a place in literature is so little possessed by the *appetite for beauty*, which is in general a leading note of the poetic temperament. He has a free, spontaneous, healthy enjoyment in external nature, but he is never forced away from thought, or from human interests, to feed upon beauty, and fill himself with its pleasures. His intercourse with nature, when it came, was an exhilarating delight, as of sunshine and fresh breezes; not a brooding lust, as for Keats; not a supersensuous, spiritual communion, as with Shelley; not, as with Wordsworth, a perpetual close friendship, with its most sweet confidences. The joys and sorrows of men possessed for him an overmastering attraction, with which nothing else could compete. He tells himself that he could not sympathize with Wordsworth's repeated poems to the daisy, that he recoiled from the statement that:—

"To me the meanest flower that blows doth give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Without stopping here to point out the injustice done to Wordsworth in suggesting a want on his part of sympathy with human nature,† it is quite certain that, after a different sort, Clough was possessed by "the enthusiasm of humanity" as by a fierce passion. Sincere as he was in his appreciation of the pure, elevated calm of Wordsworth's philosophy, and in his admiration of its chief doctrine of self-supervision, Clough's nature was too robust and its fibre tingling with too vigorous a life to allow him to sit long listening to the piping of the linnet, or resting in contemplation of daisies or celandines.

* Clough is as far as possible, we need hardly say, from approaching the opinion of a certain French anatomist of the last century, who maintained that religion and love were juices excreted by the smaller intestines situated near the pancreas. Yet he quite clearly sees that a crisis of love may be determined by "morn's early odoriferous breath" or the charms of "sea" and "solitude;" and though Dipsychus is very indignant, he feels that there is something in the words of the scoffing spirit that man may,

"Once in fortnight, by lucky chance
Of happier-tempered coffee, gain (great Heaven!)
A pious rapture."

† See "Recollections of Wordsworth," by Rev. Robert Perceval Graves, in the "Afternoon Lectures on Literature and Art," 1869.

Of course we find in Clough's poems several clever descriptions of natural scenery; but incomparably the best are those, like some in the "Bothie," which smack of the keen relish of the enjoyment imparted by mere healthy physical life, and glow with the brightness of high spirits. The bathing-place, for instance, by the falls of the Highland river, "where over a ledge of granite, into a granite bason, the amber torrent descended," would lose much of its charm were it not for the shock of the delicious plunge which we enjoy as much as "the glory of headers" himself.

"On the ledge, bare-limbed, an
Apollo, down gazing,
Eyeing one moment the beauty, the life, ere he
flung himself in it;
Eyeing through eddying green waters the green-
tinting floor underneath them;
Eyeing the bead on the surface, the bead, like a
cloud, rising to it;
Drinking in, deep in his soul, the beautiful hue
and the clearness,—
Arthur, the shapely, the brave, the unboasting,
the glory of headers."

And we ourselves are ready to shriek and to shout in the mere joy of living, as

"There, overbold, great Hobbes from a ten-foot
height descended,
Prone, as a quadruped, prone with hands and
feet protending;
There in the sparkling champagne, ecstasie,
they shrieked and shouted."

Clough explicitly sets forth in one place,—with his own acceptance of the principle,—that the object which the phenomena of the external world were made to fulfil by the older and greater poets was to supply analogies and similitudes of the phenomena of human nature. It is for such a purpose he draws the fine picture of the flow and ebb of the strong tide in the narrow loch of the western Highlands; or, with a few facile touches, shows us Claude, in "Amours de Voyage,"

"Standing, uplifted, alone, on the heaving poop
of the vessel,
Looking around on the waste of the rushing
incurious billows."

A higher glow of enthusiasm spreads over the passage in "Dipsychus" (Scene II), commencing—

"Clear stars above, thou roseate westward
sky,"—

but what we observe as noteworthy is the absence on the whole, not the presence, of a feeling for external nature, at least as shown in its more sensitive forms.

Here too we may observe that, in artistic execution, Clough cannot occupy a high place among English poets. He was too full, and too eager to give expression to all he had to say, to be very careful about the manner in which it was effected, so only he did effect his end. Nor did he belong to that highest order of poetic minds with whom expression is part of thought, inseparable from it, its vital body,—not a garment fitted to it with a measuring-rod. Seldom can we gather from Clough, as we do from the greater poets, a haunting phrase of melodious words, or a memorable sentence, or a thought compacted and close-wrought, that will break off, crystal-like, complete in its own brightness and beauty. There is little of that delicate fastidiousness of form and of diction that marks the poems of Mr. Matthew Arnold, who, in other points, sometimes reminds us of him; and there is a carelessness about the musical modulation of many of his verses, which we feel to be the less excusable when we perceive the fine ear for harmony betrayed in some of his lines.*

* The subjects of his longer poems, and the man-

We have not space left to attempt any detailed criticism of the longer poems,—to point out the rich stores of thought contained in them,—to illustrate the mastery which they exhibit in humour, irony, and profound pathos,—or to notice the delicate skill with which the poet touches the most subtle problems presented by human nature. Indeed, the newly-published poem, "Dipsychus," would rightly claim an article to itself. We have, too, to pass over in silence the beauty and charm of his many exquisite little lyrics; saying no more than that the compiler of any future English Anthology must not omit to gather for his garland such flowers as "That out of sight," &c., and "Qua cursum ventus." And others scarcely inferior may be found in these volumes.

ner in which he chooses to handle them, forbid any large use of what is commonly reckoned the poetic or elevated diction. The philosophic "chaff" of the Oxford undergraduates, or the gossip letters of the Trevellyn young ladies, could not be treated in *le grand style*. The worldly irony of the "Spirit," in "Dipsychus," would lose its point, and cease to be the utterance of Cosmocrator, were it not the colloquial—the language of the world.

THREE SONNETS.

BY JEAN INGELOW.

1.—AN ANCIENT CHIEF KING DUG FROM SOME RUINS.

HAPLY some Rajah first in the ages gone
Amid his languid ladies fingered thee,
While a black nightingale, sun-swart as he,
Sang his one wife, love's passionate oraison;
Haply thou may'st have pleased Old Prester
John

Among his pastures, when full royally
He sat in tent, grave shepherds at his knee,
While lamps of balsam winked and glimmer'd
on.

What dost thou here? Thy masters are all
dead;

My heart is full of ruth and yearning pain
At sight of thee, O king that hast a crown

Outlasting theirs, and tell'st of greatness fled
Through cloud-hung nights of unabated rain
And murmurs of the dark majestic town.

2. — COMFORT IN THE NIGHT.

She thought by heaven's high wall that she did
stray

Till she beheld the everlasting gate:
And she climbed up to it to long, and wait;
Feel with her hands (for it was night), and lay
Her lips to it with kisses; thus to pray
That it might open to her desolate.
And lo! it trembled, lo! her passionate

Crying prevailed. A little little way
It opened: there fell out a thread of light,
And she saw winged wonders move within,
Also she heard sweet talking as they meant
To comfort her. They said, "Who comes to-
night

Shall one day certainly an entrance win;"
Then the gate closed and she awoke content.

3. — THOUGH ALL GREAT DEEDS —

Though all great deeds were proved but fables
fine,

Though earth's old story could be told anew,
Though the sweet fashions loved of them that
sue

Were empty as the ruined Delphian shrine—
Though God did never man, in words benign,
With sense of His great Fatherhood endue,
Though life immortal were a dream untrue,
And He that promised it were not divine—
Though soul, though spirit were not, and all
hope

Reaching beyond the bourne, melted away;
Though virtue had no goal and good no scope,
But both were doomed to end with this our
clay —

Though all these were not, — to the ungraced
heir

Would this remain, — to live, as though they
were. Good Words.

INTERNATIONAL LAND AND LABOUR AGENCY,
TOWN HALL CHAMBERS,
BIRMINGHAM, Feb. 24, 1870.

TO THE EDITOR OF LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

SIR:—I send you herewith Cassell's Magazine, containing an article of mine vindicating our American method of spelling Latin words. Will you please read it? If you like it, I should be much gratified if you would insert it in your *Living Age*, that some of your readers may see how I have endeavored to defend and commend our American orthography in England. I intend to return to the charge and pitch into the *London Times* itself next. As you glean literature from all quarters, I hope you will be disposed to give a page or two to my essay on a subject so important to English literature the world over.

Yours, truly,

ELIHU BURRITT.

From Cassell's Magazine.
THE SUPERFLUOUS LETTER.

THERE is a familiar saying among common people which is very expressive in describing arrogant egotism, selfishness, and self-conceit. Persons addicted to this offensive habit of mind are charged with using "the great *I* and the little *u*" in their thoughts, talk, and acts. But whatever disrespect or indifference selfish individuals have shown to little *u*, English literature, for five centuries, has made ample amends for this abuse by a marked homage to that distinguished member of the alphabet. No other member of that literary community has claimed and wielded such distinctive power and influence. For five centuries, without a break in its rule, it has held the Great Seal of English literature, and stamped its Norman image and superscription upon every printed or written page that has seen the light in Great Britain in all this space of time. William the Conqueror never laid his iron sceptre more relentlessly upon the Danes, Saxons, and Celts, than did this despotic *u* upon their languages, and upon every other that it could master on the Continent also. Latin and Teutonic were all alike subject to its rule. It was no respecter of classics; and it bored through the tongues of Virgil and Cicero, and inserted in the puncture its Norman coinage and mark. It would have done the same to the wild Welsh and Gaelic if it could have caught them, and penetrated their bristling consonants.

For two hundred years before there was any printing done in England, and for all the centuries since Caxton's day, the Nor-

man *u* has ruled and taxed English literature with a heavy hand. It is not in the power of imagination, if in that of arithmetic, to estimate what that little *u* has cost our race. Up to the beginning of the present century its sway was complete. It had not released its hold upon a single word of Latin or Teutonic origin which it had seized possession of. Whether the coincidence was accidental or not, soon after the American and French Revolutions, in which many vested interests and dignities were shaken down, the Norman *u* lost a considerable portion of its dominion, though Great Britain has remained loyal and obedient to it up to this day.

In America, where the sentiment of homage to Norman genealogy is, naturally, not so hereditary and strong as in England, the *u* has been turned out bodily and for ever from all words of purely Latin or Saxon origin into which it had interpolated itself. There it will never again tax "labor," or be found in "honor," or intrude upon "neighbor," or be taken into "favor," or appear unseemly in "behavior," or be held in "savor" as anything but a Norman excrescence in the last stage of decay. But in England all these words, and a great many others of like origin, are still subjected to this Norman tax, which few English writers or readers have ever estimated duly in labor, paper, ink, or in time and money.

The meaning of a "peppercorn rent" is well known to most people. It signifies something paid periodically to the nominal or assumed owner of a certain property, merely to recognize his title to it. Whether this rent consists only of a pair of chickens, a birch-broom, or a quart of bilberries, it is enough to acknowledge and establish his ownership. Now, full one half of English literature, in manuscript or in type, is written or printed in America, and all this is completely emancipated from this peppercorn tribute to the Norman lord of the manor, or of the alphabet. But in England all the private letter-writers, book-writers, newspaper-writers, and telegram-writers still pay this homage without a murmur, and without a reason which could satisfy their minds if they applied it honestly and seriously to the subject. They may pooh-pooh it, and call it a peppercorn rent that does not amount to anything worth noticing, or, if it does, that it is worth all it costs merely to recognize and honor the grand old Norman régime. Those who believe or say this cannot have taken into account the vast increase in book, magazine, and newspaper literature since the beginning of the present century; nor have they estimated the pro-

digious increase of manuscript literature which cheap postage has produced within the same period. It would probably be below the real fact to assume that not more than half of the writing in the United Kingdom is put in type. Of course, one could not pretend to say that all the private letters written in London, if put in print, would fill all the books, magazines, and newspapers issued from the press of the metropolis. But, taking the whole country, the unprinted must equal in amount the printed literature of Great Britain and Ireland.

Now, taking into consideration the almost numberless millions of words written annually in the United Kingdom, half of which are put in type, we can arrive at some approximately true conception of the cost in money and time of this pepper-corn tribute which English literature pays to "little *u*," the Norman conqueror. A few days ago, I counted all these tribute words in a copy of the London *Times* in which that letter is retained, such as honour, labour, favour, vigour, endeavour, neighbour, etc. I found that, at the average price of setting type, and the cost of paper occupied by these superfluous and intrusive *u*'s, the peppercorn tribute paid yearly by that great oracle of English independence, justice, and freedom, after all, would not be much more than ten pounds. But it is doubtful if the London *Times* pays so much tribute money as several other periodicals of the metropolis. Some of the weekly penny magazines, with their issues of one hundred and fifty or two hundred thousand, may give, in the course of a year, more paper and ink to the Norman *u* than the *Times* itself. Thus, taking all the London and Provincial newspapers and magazines, and all the books and pamphlets printed in the United Kingdom, the English literature of Great Britain must pay at least ten thousand pounds annually in mere type-setting, paper, and ink, in doing this partial homage to the Norman. This may seem a small sum when spread over all the printed matter of the United Kingdom for a whole year. Still, it is enough to establish a great normal school for the nation, which might turn out one hundred well-educated teachers annually, to instruct the rising generations how to write English words correctly, doing justice to the Latin from which they are taken.

But ten thousand pounds a year is only the money value or amount of the tax paid by English literature to the Norman *u* on printed matter alone. There is another tax more costly and onerous still. Type-setting, paper, and ink are comparatively cheap and

plentiful. But think of the time and labor involved in writing these millions of superfluous *u*'s, without counting the hundreds of reams of letter-paper they cover. Think of the precious time that eminent English authors have lost in writing these meaningless, silent, useless letters. Just conceive how many of them Sir Walter Scott, Hallam, Milman, Carlyle, Lytton, Dickens, and Tennyson have been obliged to pen as a peppercorn homage to the cold, blue blood of the Norman. What earthly object is gained or sought by paying this tribute from generation to generation? Now, take these good, noble-minded words that have been honored in Latin classics for a thousand years, and give us the reason why they should not be so honored in the English—labor, honor, favor, vigor, color, humor. Look at them. "Are they not fairly writ," as they were in Latin for fifteen centuries and more? When you have cut or burnt into them your Norman ear-mark, do they look any fairer or more comely to the eye of the intelligent reader? Does your little *u* impart one iota of additional or different meaning to the Latin original? Does it impart to the pronunciation of that original any phonetic quality which your ear can detect? Then why should all the Latin scholars, and all the public and private writers of England go on for ever paying this detracting homage to the Norman corruptions of the Middle Ages?

There is a vigorous movement in progress for uniform international weights, coinage, and copyright; why should not the leaders of English literature in Great Britain adopt a uniform standard for the spelling of this class of words wherever our language is written on the globe? Before twenty years elapse, there will be fifty millions of readers in the American union. The literature produced in the country for their consumption will very likely equal the amount now produced both in England and America. And not in one book of American or English authorship printed on that continent—in no newspaper, magazine, primer or tract, manuscript sermon or private letter—will that Norman *u* be seen which now imposes such a tax upon private correspondence and printed matter in England. To produce uniformity in the universal literature of the English language, English writers must repudiate the homage they have paid to that letter. They must expunge it from purely Latin words, and write them as Cicero, Virgil, Horace, and Sallust wrote them, and gave them their noblest, widest significance.